# The Commonweal

## A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs



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# THE SELFISH MAJORITY

WE WERE much depressed by President Roosevelt's Gainesville speech because it emphasized a very serious menace to democracy. Business leaders have not been converted, even at this late hour, to the philosophy of the common good. They still believe in and practise the law of the jungle—the survival of the most selfish, the most greedy, the most ruthless. Unless these business leaders are speedily converted to the principles of social justice, American democracy will be gravely imperiled.

Mr. Roosevelt asserted that national progress and national prosperity are being held back chiefly because of the selfishness on the part of a few. This type of selfishness, he added, "is definitely not to be applied to the overwhelming majority of the American public."

Why not? We are quite willing to concede that a relatively small number of selfish men exercise enormous power and control over the economic life of this nation and that this minority is obdurate in its blind, unswerving adherence to the old, discredited, bankrupt, laissez-faire theory of unrestrained individualism. But we are also convinced that the views of a great many other business men, both large and small, differ not in the least from the views of the minority. If certain business men hold contrary opinions, such opinions have not been brought to our attention in any number that would cause us to modify our carefully considered judgment. The divorce between Christianity and economics has existed for such a long time that, if we exclude those who are participating in the cooperative movement and some few more, no other conclusion is possible.

We believe that Mr. Roosevelt effectively summarized the reasoning of most American business men when he directed attention to the fact that they insist that, "in the competition of life for the good things of life, some are successful because


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they have better brains or are more efficient; the wise, the swift and the strong are able to outstrip their fellow men. That is nature itself, and it is just too bad if some get left behind."

This is the law of the jungle. This is a short-sighted view of economic life in which no other consideration than profit, and more profit, and still more profit, is allowed to enter. This is the philosophy which maintains that government should adopt a "hands-off" policy and permit the titans of industry to pile up great fortunes while their fellow citizens, in ever-increasing numbers, are without the elemental necessities of decent human living. This is the ideology which proclaims the dismal doctrine that every business man should "get while the getting is good and devil take the hindmost." This is the creed, not of a minority only, but of the vast majority of American business men.

Such an attitude, Mr. Roosevelt continued, does not lead business men to give much thought to the one-third of our population which is ill-fed, ill-clad and ill-housed. They say, "I am not my brother's keeper." They pass by on the other side of the road. Most of them are honest people. Most of them consider themselves excellent citizens.

If cooperation is impossible and the warfare between government and business is resumed, as the Gainesville speech indicated that it would be resumed, there are three possible results of this deplorable tug-of-war. It will end in some sort of stalemate, in the victory of business men, or in the victory of government. In every case, the danger to democracy is very great and the menace of totalitarianism of some sort is very real.

It is inconceivable that the proletariat is going to stand idly by while this struggle occupies the center of the national stage. If things get much worse, if there is widespread suffering and destitution in this land of plenty, there will be violence and revolution. This uprising will be put down by force, and to prevent its recurrence, democratic rights and privileges will be so severely circumscribed that, for a time and possibly for a long time, our government will be called democratic only by courtesy.

Should business men win the fight, there will be such an extension of servitude that America will cease to be called the land of the free.

If government wins the fight, the victory will be achieved by such strict and universal regimentation of industry and agriculture that, while the outward forms and externals of democracy may survive, the inner vitalizing spirit of democracy will be as dead as it is in Germany, Russia, Italy and Mexico.

Is there any escape from totalitarianism in the United States?

Yes—upon one condition. American democracy can survive only if there is a profound renewal and revival of the Christian spirit among all our people. David Lawrence and other prominent editors have declared that we cannot set in motion the great forces of profitable business by waving a magic wand. There must be a renaissance of the human spirit. There must be a new awakening—a new attitude of mind among individuals as well as nations.

"Could we but spread over the world a new spirit," he asserted, "a new approach to the perplexing problems that are tearing the hearts of mankind, we would be making substantial progress. For we cannot solve our difficulties by merely feeding and clothing the unemployed. We cannot go on from year to year with seven million or more people in our own ranks depressed in spirit, carrying the badge of humiliation and defeat in an economic system that dins into our ears the doctrine of the law of the survival of the fittest and the supposed compensations of a bleeding deflation."

Very little will be accomplished if we merely castigate selfish business leaders for their hostility to the philosophy of the common good. The reformation which we ardently desire will not be achieved if our only ambition is to convert the other fellow. We are nearly all in some measure responsible for the selfish economic and financial warfare that flourished in past decades. If we did not actively participate in it, if we did not encourage it, if we did not applaud and envy the shameless victors, we at least condoned it. We remained silent. As in previous editorials, we again insist upon the personal responsibility of each American citizen for the appalling barbarism that has flourished for so long in this nation. If we are to build up a new civilization on the ruins of the old, a truly Christian civilization, we must first become converted, not to some vague humanitarianism, not to some milk-and-water substitute for orthodox Christianity, but to the Christianity of the Apostolic Age—vibrant, life-giving, intolerant of error, hating sin, but loving the sinner.

## Week by Week

THE JAPANESE government will pay the full amount of the claim of $2,214,007.36 which the United States asked for the sinking last December of the gunboat Panay. It is assumed that Japan will also honor other claims for losses incident to the warfare in China which are now being compiled in Washington. The Tokyo government also assured the United States that it would stop its vessels from salmon fishing in Alaska waters. Premier Milan

The Trend of Events

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Hodza announced that a new period of minority policy has begun in Czechoslovakia. But such a policy, he immediately added, would be based on the integrity of the State and its Constitution and the principle that neither Germans, Hungarians, Russians nor Poles, neither Czechs nor Slovaks, would be denationalized. The government again affirmed its determination not to yield, under any circumstances, to moral, economic or political pressure. In a series of plebiscite campaign speeches, however, Chancellor Hitler repeatedly denounced the Treaty of Versailles and referred to the 10,000,000 Germans who "suffered or still suffer" from the artificial frontiers erected by that treaty. The prevailing opinion at the moment seems to be that neither Britain, France nor Russia will defend the independence of Czechoslovakia. Most observers discount the possibility of a major European war in the near future and believe that, after the Austrian plebiscite is concluded and whenever Hitler is ready, Czechoslovakia will yield to his terms.

OUR GOVERNMENT inquired of a number of governments in Europe and in this hemisphere whether they would be willing to cooperate in setting up a special committee for the purpose of facilitating the emigration of political refugees from Germany and Austria. This emergency emigration would be undertaken and financed by private organizations within the respective countries. President Roosevelt, commenting on the plan, asserted that our government's proposal embraced Jewish, Protestant and Catholic members of the persecuted minorities of Russia, Italy and Spain. So far as the United States is concerned, this would mean that approximately 18,000 refugees would be able to enter this country legally within the next four months. During the fiscal year beginning next July 1, 36,136 persons from the five countries will be admissible. Dealing with the problem, it would seem that consideration should be given not only to the number of refugees, but to their training and business, and also to the possible trade and professional needs and opportunities in the countries of this hemisphere. In this way the complaints of displacing labor might be to some extent obviated, and the refugees to the Americas could feel sure of occupying useful positions in their new countries. There might be a three-way benefit, to the exiles, to the western nations, and to the present workers in this hemisphere. The problem is indeed urgent, but it cannot be solved by the United States alone. We are confident that if all the nations in this hemisphere make their contribution, a solution will be achieved that, while not causing injury or injustice to the nationals of the respective countries, will provide a place of refuge for those who find life intolerable in totalitarian countries.

ON MARCH 28, the Senate passed the Governmental Reorganization Bill by a vote of 49 to 42. It is quite possible that within a few days this bill will have been approved by the House and will have become an act; only a tremendous expression of popular disapproval could prevent Senator Byrnes's bill from becoming law; and although a flood of telegrams and letters disapproving the measure reached senators over the week-end preceding passage, it seems unlikely that public disapproval will assume such proportions as to delay the enactment of the measure. The activities of such organizations as the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government have rendered suspect the spontaneity of telegraphic and epistolary bombardments against specific legislation. Father Coughlin has also been at work. The attack on the present Governmental Reorganization Bill reflects the fears of those elements in the population which have come to distrust the President's capacity to carry out properly an admittedly necessary reorganization of the federal executive departments. No other construction can be put upon the opposition, since the provisions of the bill itself are reasonable and clearly designed to expedite and facilitate reorganization. To call the bill iniquitous" or "a dagger in the heart of democracy," to cite some of the milder expressions used by its opponents, amounts merely to attacking the President's ability and good-will in handling the powers which the bill puts at his disposal. One cannot help wondering whether an identical bill would not have been greeted with universal approval if introduced four years ago, when confidence in Mr. Roosevelt was at its height. Here is no question of governmental principle, as was true of the Supreme Court fight of a year ago, but one purely of method and personalities, and the issue must be judged on this basis. A criticism of the bill which deserves serious consideration is that directed against the provision which replaces the bi-partizan Civil Service Commission with a single Civil Service Administrator. Such a change can threaten the very basis of Civil Service if a bad choice is made for the office of administrator.

IT IS difficult to see why President Cárdenas has chosen this particular moment to expropriate the foreign oil industry, which was currently providing in taxes one-seventh of the national income. The cost of his "socialization" policy—a huge road-building and dam-construction program together with the setting up of communal farms for poor peons—has weighed so heavily on the national economy that further dents in that creaky structure would seem fatal. The desperate attempt to secure added revenue

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and encourage native industry by high tariffs recently cut Mexico's vital foreign trade and in recent weeks foodstuffs have risen in price as high as 50 percent. Metal reserves of the Bank of Mexico have now fallen so low that currency control has been set up and business is largely confined to a cash basis. The exodus of foreign oil operatives has left the fields without the proper engineers, while storage and rail facilities are shown to be completely inadequate. The temporary cessation of United States silver purchases, the backbone of our financial and moral support of the Cárdenas régime for the past five years, must come as a crushing blow. The lethargic participation of the Mexican workers in the expropriation celebrations indicates that they sense the bleakness of their immediate future. Has Cárdenas staked everything on an impossible gamble and thus prepared the coming of another revolution below the Rio Grande? Although Mexico has started a liberation fund to indemnify the oil companies, it does not seem likely that they will receive an adequate sum. In a world increasingly fearful of unilateral coups we cannot commend this sudden seizure of these imperialist enterprises, whatever the pretext or justification, but we have few tears for the industries that have for years exploited the inanimate resources and indigent humanity of undeveloped Mexico.

**For the Control of Cancer**

THE TWENTY-FIFTH anniversary of the founding of the American Society for the Control of Cancer is being observed in several ways, one of the most notable being the opening of the exhibit entitled "Cancer Can Be Cured" at the International Building of Rockefeller Center. There is scarcely anyone, however fortunate he may be in his own health or that of his family—or however preoccupied he may be with other troubles than those the Society seeks to alleviate—who can remain unstirred by its history and its purpose. The scourge of cancer is taking increased toll in modern years. Some of the increase noted is undoubtedly due to the improvement in methods of detection; but that there is also an increased incidence is not, we believe, denied. Nor is it only the menace of cancer statistics, the frequent tragic suffering of cancer patients, the admitted mortality of the disease in its later stages, which make the problem one of the most serious faced in modern times. It is the insidious nature of the early stages of the trouble. Records demonstrate again and again that cancer may work undetected in the system until it has passed a stage of curative treatment. The society has done especially fine work in this field. Without hysteria or sensationalism, it has conducted a steady campaign for making the public conscious of the character of the disease, and arousing the suspicions of possible sufferers before it is too late. A nation-wide "Cured Cancer Club" is being sponsored as one feature of the anniversary observance. It is said that at least 25,000 are eligible for membership—a wonderful tribute to the power of modern medicine. It is to be hoped that some effective organization can be made of these legions of the restored, for proper demonstration purposes. Nothing could be more persuasive or solidly helpful in reaching that section of the public which must be reached now if it is not to be forever too late.

**Homemaker, Male?**

THE MODERN rediscovery of the family, though by no means complete, is a fact; and this particularly sound development has special implications for the masculine members thereof. The father as a parent has been under-realized, neglected, semi-atrophied in a large section of our civilization ever since the industrial revolution broke up the family as a producing unit; and subjected its members to that centrifugal force which compels more and more people to seek their significance outside the home. However, it is one thing to realize that the father has a vital function inside the home—that children need the formative action of his personality and character precisely as much as they need those of the mother. It is another to go the whole way with a gentleman who writes to the New York *Times* (the letter, wisely perhaps, bears only an initialed signature) his intention of becoming a professional housekeeper. His reasons touch upon still another field of the home-and-industry situation, but his basic position is that men have high domestic talent. He, himself, though trained in two universities for "something of a more masculine nature," is "a thoroughly experienced housekeeper and plain cook"; he is fond of children, "can keep them amused" and teach them languages. But over and above all this: "Women are doing my work, so it seems I've got to do theirs. Incidentally and modestly, I can do their work better than they can do mine." Therein, we would point out, lies the rub. Some women, at least, can do this courageous gentleman's work as well as he can—that is why they are doing it. But as to their work—ah! The cooking and housecleaning can be conceded without argument. But there is much, much more to child-training than keeping the child amused and teaching it French. The rubbery resilience under child questions, the perpetual care for minutiae in character-training, the necessary tranquillity in the face of surface disorder, the knowledge of when to slap and when not to slap—has this gentleman mastered these complicated arts? If he has, his claim must be conceded, and his statue should be erected on his village green.

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# QUEBEC FOSTERS COOPERATION

By E. L. CHICANOT

THE QUEBEC government is taking unusual steps to promote the idea of cooperation among its people. A program has just been launched which, in each year for the next ten years, comprehends the intensive training of approximately three hundred young men from the rural areas in the principles of cooperation, with a view to rendering them capable of managing cooperative enterprises. The plan is destined to make cooperation a much more significant factor in the economy of the province, thrusting Quebec further to the forefront in this respect among similar areas in North America.

The provincial government, long sympathetic to the cooperative idea, even supporting it in a material way, clearly expects it to accomplish much more in the future toward improving the lot of the rural population. And in considering the program which has just been launched, in the mass of material one reads today on the subject of cooperation, it must be borne in mind that there is probably no soil on the North American continent better suited to the growth of this doctrine than that of Quebec. Here is a population of approximately 3,000,000, largely homogenous. They are for the main part adherents of a single religion which advocates the principles of cooperation, and whose local representatives are looked to for much more than spiritual guidance. The rural population is approximately double the urban population, and there are only two points where population is concentrated beyond the 50,000 mark. Then, too, one must take into consideration what Quebec has already accomplished in the direction of cooperation.

The most outstanding example is, of course, Les Caisses Populaires, or the Cooperative People's Banks which, founded in the first year of the century, was the first cooperative credit society in North America, has functioned successfully without interruption since and has never had to charge off a bad loan. Organized throughout the province, in rural districts among farmers, in fishing villages, and among miners, it loans sums as low as $10, though most of the loans are for a sum between $100 and $300. In 1935, there were 201 such banks reporting, whereas in 1915 there were only 91. In the period membership has grown from 23,614 to 43,270, and depositors from 13,696 to 43,234. The number of borrowers in 1935 was 12,049 and the loans granted 12,430. The value of the loans granted was $2,824,136 and the profits realized $473,545. The expansion in the number and volume of business of these credit societies in Quebec in recent years has been marked and is, partially at least, due to the fact that since 1932 the provincial government has granted a yearly subsidy of $20,000 to the federation of district unions, with the object of fostering the founding, maintenance and inspection of such societies.

The government also encourages the organization and development of fishermen's cooperatives through making substantial yearly grants and maintaining fisheries' inspectors for examining and grading fish. Through thus improving the quality of the fish marketed, especially for export, returns to the fishermen have been considerably augmented and the lot of those following this calling in certain areas has been correspondingly improved. Though much yet remains to be done in this direction, steady progress is being made under government encouragement. It has just been announced that at the School of Agriculture at Ste Anne de la Pocatiere there is to be created a school of fisheries, and the college authorities will also be charged with the task of organizing fishermen's cooperatives. Students will follow the college courses in winter and will be taken to Gaspé for practical experience in the summer.

Legislation regarding cooperative agricultural associations in the province, though amended since, dates from 1908. The government makes a grant of 1½ percent on the amount of sales to associations fulfilling its regulations, which are to consist of at least twenty-five members, each subscribing for five or ten shares valued at $10 per share and contracting for at least three years to deliver, buy or sell certain products through the association. In 1935, more than two-thirds of the associations benefited thereby. There were then 158 associations reporting, including a provincial federation for the purchase and sale of all agricultural products and five provincial and thirteen regional cooperative societies of varied activities. The remaining number were local societies. A total of 21,875 members accounted for sales of over $12,000,000.

It is this class of cooperatives, most intimately affecting the lives and livelihoods of the greatest number of people in the province, that the government's latest plan is designed to encourage. When, as a result of the investigations of the National Employment Commission, the federal government made certain funds available to cooperating provinces contributing like sums "for the decrease of unemployment and aid to farming," Quebec devised a two-phased scheme for

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the latter purpose. First, to give courses in some three hundred parishes throughout the province, designed to fit from six to seven thousand young folks for the efficient operation of farms, and render them proficient in the adoption of agricultural methods to the conditions of the locality. Second, to promote the cooperative idea throughout the rural districts through annual courses of training to be given over the next ten years.

Applications were invited, to attend such a course this winter at the five agricultural colleges and schools of the province, French and English; and the response was overwhelming, so that it was possible to follow a certain process of selection. From every parish in the province one or more young men, averaging twenty-five years of age, were accepted and distributed among the schools, about sixty in each. Presumed to be unemployed, at least at the time of application, their traveling expenses both ways are paid, they are boarded free, and necessary expenses up to a dollar a day paid.

Three hundred intelligent and eager young Quebeckers are following an intensive two months' course, which covers the principles of cooperation, marketing, business administration, including bookkeeping, the management of people's banks and other cooperative enterprises, and grades and standards. The course is practical as well as theoretical, existing cooperative enterprises being thoroughly examined, visits made to packing plants, creameries, hatcheries, etc., and professors report the greatest enthusiasm and success.

At the end of the course these young men who came from every parish in the province, discouraged perhaps at the inability of their families and neighbors to make farming as profitable as they would like, will return to carry the gospel of cooperation, to be the leaders of study groups, to aid in the organization and become the managers of new cooperative enterprises, which will come into existence. Next winter, their places at the five agricultural colleges will be taken by three hundred other alert young men, and so the program will unfold over the next ten years until the whole of rural Quebec is impregnated with the cooperative idea, authoritatively transmitted and intelligently imbibed.

Enjoying the advocacy of the ecclesiastical authorities, that counts for so much in Quebec, and being actively supported by the provincial government, cooperation, which has been quietly growing in the province for some time, has become an important factor in its material advance, has definitely elevated the economic status of many groups of primary workers, and is apparently due to make much greater progress in the future. Quebec, which set the example for the rest of the continent in the matter of credit unions and has seen the idea take rapid hold, may further demonstrate the scope to which cooperation can extend in a territory's affairs.

# APPROACH TO MEDIEVAL RESEARCH

By DAVID A. ELMS

IT SEEMS like a long way back to the early days of this present century, when writers on medieval history felt obliged to gloat over the Schoolmen who were wont to argue concerning how many angels could dance on the point of a needle. Scarcely any author records the hackneyed reference today. Should one do so, a footnote generally reminds us politely that such discussion, though trivial enough at first sight, really sharpened men's intellects by forcing them to draw very fine distinctions. This remarkable change in attitude has come about because the Middle Ages are now no longer considered nearly so benighted as our forebears of the Classical Revival and their spiritual descendants once upon a time imagined.

Fruitful researches, especially during the past thirty years, have rendered medieval studies both respectable and important. For some time it has been almost the smart thing to be rated as a medievalist. And the learned world has shown itself in no wise tardy in taking up cudgels for the cause. Journals like *Speculum,* an academy on the order of St. Michael's at Toronto, the revival of scholastic philosophy at Louvain and at Harvard, countless dissertations and monographs, compilations with such titles as "Medieval Contributions to Modern Civilization" and "The Legacy of the Middle Ages," the cultivation of medieval Latin even in some of our current school texts—all such aspects of the movement certainly bespeak an overwhelming triumph for the medievalists. A far cry indeed from the days of Gibbon, Robertson and Hallam!

Yet medievalism still gives rise to a deal of controversy. Perhaps this is an inevitable situation and will continue to remain so. There are those who believe in all sincerity that the Middle Ages are the centuries of faith, when men most truly realized the Christian ideal. Return to them we must, they seem to implore, or we shall suffer the direst of consequences. Others, in supposedly equal good faith, find as unmistakably in the epoch the very worst examples of ignorance, superstí-

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tion and intolerance. In point of fact, the term "medieval" itself arouses in many otherwise quite reasonable minds what amounts to the very antithesis of all that is usually deemed cultured, enlightened and progressive. There has been a wealth of material to examine and much of it has already been perused. The conceptions of "bright ages" and "dark ages" are obviously tenable, providing one sets out with definite theories to prove.

It is easy to demonstrate that trained scholars have nearly always found the things they sought and frequently little else besides. An inspiring picture of the brilliant activities of medieval men has been painted for us in the works of two authorities who are highly praised by Mr. Ralph Adams Cram, himself most friendly to the "Ages of Faith": Henry Adams and Dr. James J. Walsh. Indeed, Mr. Cram has gone so far as to declare that if one wishes the best possible idea of the period, one should consult the well-known books of these two authors. Canvases of a far less edifying character, however, are those displayed by M. Luchaire and Dr. G. G. Coulton, craftsmen whose access to original sources has never for a moment been questioned. Yet their conclusions lead them to an emphasis on the grim, futile and insipid traits of our medieval ancestors. Two such divergent interpretations surely prove that a middle viewpoint and larger context are much to be desired.

A sense of unreality and dissatisfaction has for some years been noted in various quarters. Especially interesting is the reaction of one sympathetic medievalist. Dr. De Wulf of Louvain once intimated that he was a bit weary of hearing the thirteenth extolled as the greatest of all the centuries. He cited the attempt of certain enthusiasts to show the vast superiority of a Gothic cathedral over a modern railroad locomotive. Since the two objects under discussion are so utterly different, it seemed to him both odious and absurd to compare their relative merits. Yet such idle banter has actually taken place. It has evidently embarrassed some of our devotees of the medieval culture to discover that the builders of Chartres also believed in the burning of heretics and witches. Seemingly, we have by no means as yet abandoned that penchant for polemics which was so popular during the nineteenth century. Several friends of the medieval period have recently indicated, moreover, that this particular style of historiography is bound to defeat its own purposes. For as soon as the reader comes to distrust the impartiality of the writer, he discounts immediately the truth of everything he reads.

Then again, there are the wishful thinkers who would restore the conditions of a past age. Since they hate or fear the disagreeable features of many of our modern social problems, a party has arisen which chooses to find in medievalism a panacea for present-day ills. Such persons remind us somewhat of those sixteenth-century reformers who fondly tried to restore what they termed primitive Christianity, only too forgetful of our Lord's figure of the Church as a mustard seed, which was destined to grow into a great tree. Just recently at a luncheon conducted under the auspices of the American Catholic Historical Association, Professor Ross Hoffman of New York University made reference to the people who are convinced that the words "Catholic" and "medieval" have an identical connotation. Many Catholics and non-Catholics apparently share this view. But other friends of the Church are as fully persuaded that she exists for all time, and notwithstanding the fact that many of her ceremonies are quite manifestly derived from the era under question, she is just as truly ancient or modern, as she is medieval. At any rate, it is well to observe that for better or for worse, we cannot turn back the clock of history.

Nobody, of course, challenges the point that for many years able and unprejudiced scholars have produced innumerable special studies which brightly illumine certain aspects of the Middle Ages. To mention but a few, we may note for example: Thorndike on medieval science and magic, Haskins on the Normans and the Renaissance of the twelfth century, Taylor on the medieval mind, Diehl on the Byzantine culture, Munro on the Crusades, De Wulf and Gilson on medieval philosophy, Walsh on the Popes and science, Kenney on early Irish studies, Father Jarrett on social theories during the Middle Ages. If such methods as these historians employ could be extended to a broader field, we should soon possess an infinitly more satisfactory background than our present incomplete and fragmentary one.

We are in need of more syntheses of the type that Mr. Christopher Dawson of University College in Exeter, England, has already accomplished for the formerly much-maligned "Dark Age." His work certainly illustrates what is coming to be regarded as a most desirable trend. In the introduction to his valuable "Making of Europe" he tells us that history should be the great corrective to that "parochialism in time" which is one of the outstanding faults of our modern society. Dawson also reminds us that it is not the "easy" epochs of history that are most worth studying. One important merit of the historical discipline is that it takes us out of ourselves and away from obvious and long-accepted facts. What a refreshing departure such sentiments are from that antiquarianism so dear to nineteenth-century writers of the romantic school!

We are in need, then, of a broader context because we ourselves are not medieval but modern men. For that very reason we should not attempt

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to read into our interpretations of a past civilization the predilections of our own times. As Dawson and others have stated, one can now observe a reaction to the old-fashioned idea that the present affords an absolute standard by which to judge the past and that all history is an inevitable progress which comes to fruition in our present state of things. The late Professor Haskins of Harvard used to tell his graduate students that the prime purpose of history is to make the past live. But we must make it live in its own way, that is to say, in keeping with its proper mode. Such a task is very difficult, but most rewarding. So we were informed at the Historical Association's luncheon by Professor Martin McGuire of the Catholic University, himself an eminent authority on medieval manuscripts. We find, accordingly, one of the most telling reasons for the continuation of medieval research in this quest for a pattern which shall be at once more organic and basic for the field as a whole.

Granted, however, that our knowledge of the Middle Ages is well worth while, that it has already been enormously enriched, and that prejudices on whatever side have largely abated, we are still faced by a problem. How are we to ensure the perpetuation of medieval studies? In other words, is it likely that we can secure for them any considerable public support? For scholarly pursuits must be nurtured in the modern age even as were the Italian artists by their enthusiastic patrons of the quattrocento. If such a fervor is lacking, it must be cultivated in the right places, according to Professor Herbert C. F. Bell of Wesleyan University, during the past year president of the American Catholic Historical Association. For there are opposing currents abroad which would sweep away the foundations of medievalism, strong though these seem at present.

Possibly the movement will be compelled to face another struggle for existence. We of today happen to be living in a period which lays an undue emphasis on things present and to come. True, we are unable to cut ourselves off from the past. But a systematic study of the remote past must be convincingly justified. One rather interesting case in point may suffice for the purpose. In a recent issue of *Pax*, a Benedictine of Prinknash, England, observed that the future of his order would probably be on quite other than medieval lines. What a blow such a declaration must be to those who regard the religious orders uncompromisingly obscurantist! Yet medievalism can survive as a fruitful study, provided that it is properly assisted.

Genuine friends of the cause (and not mere sentimentalists) should now muster their forces. Texts must be edited and learned monographs compiled, but there is also a crying need for popularizations of the subject. And such writings must indicate, more vitally than has hitherto been done, those attainments of our medieval forefathers which have a real significance for men of the present time. Certain topics like the Crusades apparently have a perennial fascination, as is evidenced by the eagerness which has greeted the volumes by Mr. Lamb and Mr. Belloc. Most moderns, nevertheless, are aware of a pervading remoteness, whenever the Middle Ages are brought up. Such a state of affairs might have been observed in a class of average fifth form boys, for example, until they were subjected to a good deal of reading in a book like William Stearns Davis's "Life on a Medieval Barony."

Not enough has been done to vivify the Renaissance of the twelfth century, or to demonstrate the conflict of the cultures of East and West, of North and South, in medieval Europe. Nor is the public sufficiently informed about the splendid researches of Dr. Gilson and his associates at St. Michael's. There comes to mind his brilliant paper on "Medieval Universalism" in the Harvard Tercentenary Publications, which was noted editorially by the New York *Times* about a year ago. We of the twentieth century can certainly learn a lot from the only decent internationalism that ever existed, that of the University of Paris during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

My points may be summarized, then, somewhat as follows. Modern interest in medievalism began as an aspect of the romantic movement about a hundred years ago. The results of such researches were put to various uses: patriotic, artistic, literary, religious. For those who had "an axe to grind" it proved particularly helpful to discover extraordinary facts so as to shock those with whom one disagreed. Others, hostile to the era in general, could marshal plenty of evidence to bring out the cogency of the "dark ages" theory. But of late a broader context and less sweeping viewpoint have been considered more desirable. Both light and shade have been depicted. As a consequence, one finds that many lessons can be drawn from the "unfinished business" as well as actual accomplishments of the Middle Ages.

## *Paper-hanger Makes Good*

*(". . . a paper-hanger, and a poor one at that" — Cardinal Mundelein.)*

Heil, the conquering hero comes
(And "cleaning-house" begins),
He plasters swastiks on the walls,
And thus another nation wins.

His Eminence mistook his skill
(He spoke no doubt in haste),
For who before has conquered worlds
With paper, brush and paste?

RODERICK MACEACHEN.

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# THE GRAND NATIONAL

By CLARKE ROBINSON

SPRING has arrived and with it the Grand National, that fairyland of the incredible. This most colorful of all horse races has come to settle into the first notch wherever the sport of the horse is discussed. There are many reasons why this event is in such high estate, but probably the fact that millions of dollars are invested in its outcome in each city, village and hamlet all over the world accounts for its popularity.

Ten years ago, the population of America knew little or nothing of this most gruelling steeplechase, but today "Sweep" tickets are peddled from Maine to California and scarcely a child but awaits eagerly the result. A "ticket" with its attendant high hopes becomes household talk for weeks leading into the race.

The Grand National in itself is the greatest sporting event in the world. It was that long before the Irish stirred up romance for the jaded palates by making it a huge lottery. It has been run on the Aintree course, which stands on a bare plane outside Liverpool, every year since 1839 with the exception of the war years when it was contested at Gatwick.

It seems rather a long jump from the rodeo match-races which were originally run over plowed ground, to the modern steeplechase course over four miles long with its thirty jumps of fir, gorse and spruce marked by gay flags. It is vast and brilliant. No sporting event in history compares with it.

All about one is the noise and abandon of masses of folks on holiday. A half million subjects of the king and all their guests have journeyed to Liverpool so that they may get a glimpse of the world's most difficult jumping race. These must of necessity make a great and kaleidoscopic panorama.

From early morning, on the day of the race, long lines of people pour out toward Aintree from Liverpool. They come on foot, in automobiles, in buses, and in clouds of dust. Special trains arrive at the Aintree station at the rate of one a minute from Edinburgh, Glasgow, York, Swansee, Gloucester and a hundred different places, disgorging race-goers. Lanes and paths and side streets are crammed with shining cars, horse-drawn vehicles and even donkey carts. Planes twinkle out of the clear sparkling sky and silver steam yachts clutter up the Mersey River.

Chatter and laughter rich in the idiom of a score of dialects, from the rolling Cornish b-r-r, to the rich brogues of the cockey Irish, bring a breeze of holiday tune. The great towering stands gradually fill with bank upon bank of humanity, and the paddock and lawns of beautiful green turf make effective settings for immaculate tweeds, tinted velvets, light-colored silks and smart furs.

Acrobats and tipsters, with stable secrets, are under everyone's feet and hawkers with barrel-loads of meat pies. Conjurers and photographers are surrounded by laughing groups. Cockneys slug enormous mugs of tea. Street musicians play American Swing with blaring trumpets, and many do not even recognize the royal family when they arrive on their way to the county-stand over which the royal standard flaps lazily.

Crowds pour into the circle of the race course from Melling Road, and the strident voices of the bookmakers on the rails and in the rings echo with a heavy business. "Luck, yes, but 'tis trainin' and grand hard work t'counts . . ." filters into your ear in the purr of the brogue of County Galway. "Did I ever tell ye how I trained some o' the ladeens in the Duhallow hunt . . . ?"

A babble of voices pierce the dense wall of sound, naming winners in advance: "Glenside. . . . Lutter. . . . Jerry M. 100-9. . . . Roman Candle neglected at 28-1."

At the cry of a groom the crowd stampede and jump out of the way as a trainer comes by with a sheeted horse. A tall man in a tweed hunting jacket with a polka-dotted stock holds court to a group of hunting enthusiasts. "A fast brilliant jumper, Coronet, but niver could he fly the obstacles like Cloister," trails from him.

The whole air is full of throbbing tension and a dull roar of talk rises. The stands in the last few minutes have become a solid cliff of living beings. People mill back and forth in the enclosure, gazing out at the post parade of the first flat race, with its bobbing line of jockeys in vari-colored jackets. A girl with reddish-brown hair and clear blue eyes pushes her way through the milling crowd to pin sprigs of shamrock on a little knot of Irish friends.

And at last the big event is coming up—the Grand National. The long steeplechase course is made ready, stretching away into the distance, one great fence after another.

The titled aristocracy of the horse world surround the favorite in the paddock. He's a handsome, powerful horse, black as midnight, with a long back and strangely short quarters.

"Why did they scratch him at Cheltenham?" asks a man with a long-skirted tweed coat.

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"A stud in his hind shoe caught in the brush at Sandown and lamed him for a fortnight, I understand. 'E was first at Hurst Park."

Three more horses come through a little gate to the right, stepping with mincing steps, in the sunshine.

"Hi . . . there's Sheepthorne."

Everyone turns. This horse has been backed into joint favoritism.

"If 'e just don't rush them fences," says a hunting squire from the Shires.

"G'wan, he's a better stayer than the favorite and that's what's important," a burly Yorkshire cattleman in a turtleneck sweater, declares.

" 'E'll fly 'em today. They 'ad 'im takin 'em askew for a month up at Lewes, and he ain't done a rasper oncet. And w'y not? Barry and his trainer 'ave planned the race fer months."

A party of flower girls begin pelting the red hocks of the stallion with the blossoms from their baskets and a man flings out: "B'God on the 'callover' he's an even favorite now: 7 to 2."

Another group of horses trailed by grooms and stable lads come in, their manes long and smooth, with flowing tails and glossy coats shining from careful grooming.

Back and forth across the paddock fly the arguments as to whether the Irish or the English will take the day.

"He's a hobby harse."

"A mouth like iron."

"Well, the bloody cheek of ye."

"That chestnut won the Conyingham Cup."

"Didn't Farrel do the Hat Trick on 'im?"

"And the going was greasy at Naas."

And now come the riders . . . most of them amateur gentlemen. A flash of pale color shows beneath the polo coat of a young Britisher which matches the pink silk of his cap. Another calmly sticks a bat under his arm and strikes a light to a cigarette. One would scarcely think these fellows were going out to ride a gruelling four miles over the most treacherous jumps known.

The blue "Weighed In" flag suddenly shoots skyward. A bugle blows the post call. The jockeys strip their coats and fling them to valets. A few trainers take their saddle girths up a notch and give their charges a final pat as they are swung about.

In cadence comes the call from the Paddock Judge: "Mount yer jockeys!"

Trainers and owners grasp the upheld boots of their riders and throw them into the saddles. The riders run their laced reins through their fingers as a chap next you observes: " 'Tis the best wan, that speed combination, Rogers and that stallion. They'll win."

"Whist, the lad niver's as grand a rider as his father before him. Shure there's nary a steeplechase course in Ireland where he didn't break a bone 'er win a race," echos a sporting farmer. "That's the wan though. Who's to beat 'im?"

Thousands begin to rush toward their seats. Crowds in the middle of the field start milling for better vantage spots on the rails. You watch the long, long post parade disappearing into the railed course. The colors of your jockey run together in a bewildering blur and vanish into a bobbing blot of pastel shuttling into the other jockey's jackets, and hardly have you lost sight of him when he appears again and your colors are as vivid as ever.

The tumult and shouting gradually recede into a tense expectant hush. A rabbit scurries across the sand track and a few boys climb on the sides of the great coaches. It is so still now that the wind carries the instructions of the starter to the riders over to you with the utmost clearness.

And then. . . . From the great arena comes a swelling bellow of noise and a thundering of hoofs like muffled shots.

"They're running!"

Plunging on . . . jockeying for position . . . they roar and flash by. And in that brief, incredible interlude which will, in a few minutes mark the finish, the focus of romance will heap fortunes in the laps of some few holders of lucky tickets.

They pound by, taking the first fence in stride, with only one going down. Over another they go . . . over another and another, marked by gay little flags and falling away into the distance.

In the next few minutes they are in front of you again—not all, just those who have stood up—and the great yells of multitudes rooting for their choices sound in your ears. Then they circle the gruelling course once more, and history is made or broken in the lives of those few who hold winning tickets in the Grand National of 1938.

## *Spider*

He builds a staircase of a thread
So fine it trembles at his tread.
A prison like a snowflake's shape
Allows the victim no escape.
He seems to slumber, but no sleep
Wakes like lightning winged, to leap
With frenzied hands and knowing skill
To work his calculating will.
Day by patient day he mends
The broken web, the straggling ends
Until the blade of autumn's gale
Reaps the wrinkled craftsman frail
And leaves his net to snare the dust,
The rose's petals, stained with rust.

ELEANOR ALLETTA CHAFFEE.

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# VEUILLOT, OF "L'UNIVERS"

By H. A. JULES-BOIS

VEUILLOT'S words at times bewilder us; but after reflection we feel edified.

"Without poverty," he confesses, "I would have been lost." To this love for poverty extolled by Saint Francis, he joined a love also for toil and a repulsion for debauchery. When a youth he would, since he earned scarcely thirty francs a month, go to the banks of the Seine early in the morning in order to buy some books, after having spent the night reading those he owned. There he helped the humble journeymen gathering sand at five sous an hour.

Indeed he never stood for *la facilité* (the easy way of doing things). "One should go to heaven with a stone in his shoe," he would say.

He anticipated the reproach that he was too harsh in his newspaper, *L'Univers,* and his books. In a moment of effusion he cried: "That which I had wished to sing I was compelled to defend!" Without a uniform he was a *palladin,* but his wars were wars of ideas. Finally they did good, above all to those he opposed.

However, the sharp attacks from Veuillot's pen came not from envy or a too accelerated *élan vital,* as they say today, but from an over-generosity of soul. "He who loves well, chastises well," says an old French proverb. And one of our poets has said, "Love is but a burning name of justice." Père Janvier acknowledged that in Veuillot anger was kindled not by hatred of persons but by his love for God-made man. And Jules Lemaître, the most lucid of our critics, said: "His fits of wrath came from a superabundance of charity."

He was not a partizan. Deliberately he affirmed: "A party is a hatred; a system is a fetter. . . . We do not belong either to Paul or to Cephas; we belong to Christ." So the unity and continuity of his life were maintained from the time of his conversion to his death.

He denied that he was a reactionary, clinging to the dead past. "They say I am but reviving old memories," he protested, "yet, on the contrary, I announce." In fact, he was in advance of his time. Christian patriotism led him to forge the slogan, "L'Union Sacrée," which only half a century afterward Poincaré persuaded France to use during the World War.

Furthermore, he foresaw the necessity of a "Catholic Action" years before its official establishment, and he took the initiative at a time when no organization of that kind was in prospect and despite the current opinion that the layman has no rôle to play, no positive mission, in the spreading of religion socially or by education.

Encouraged by several bishops, who were his friends, and by the Vatican, and faithful also to the pithy words of Joseph de Maistre, he asserted with the author of "Les Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg" that "every man, if he has strength and knowledge enough for it, is expected to bring a stone for the august edifice, the plans of which are visibly outlined." A citizen worthy of the name, Veuillot added, ought, in his capacity, to aid the militant clergy in improving spiritual conditions.

Peace among nations he wanted to see definitely established, though he knew that such an aim was difficult to attain and could be achieved not by tricks of diplomacy but by a sustained morality.

"God," he wrote, "permits flaming war to travel over human kind like a physician makes curative fire travel over an infirm limb."

Finally this exclamation which springs from the lips of a fervent communicant: "Those people who do not partake of Christ are insatiable like the locust."

Veuillot was reputed for his constancy and steadfastness in the contentions of public life; but his equanimity was submitted to the severest test in his private life. His family trials catastrophically resembled the Greek tragedies of old.

At first his marriage was one of unalloyed happiness; but it may happen that, when God grants us a glimpse of paradise here below, it is of short duration followed by a painful awakening. His felicity was soon crushed by sorrow. His "sweet Mathilde" gave him six daughters, of whom suddenly, within a few months, there remained but two. Soon after, the mother herself died at the age of thirty years!

He never remarried. According to Paul Claudel, his letters at this time contain pages "perhaps the most heartrending and sublime in the French language." Climbing his human calvary, this father, this husband, was lifted beyond stoicism into Christian valor and purification. To a friend he could write: "I am not beaten down because I am on my knees." By his humble acceptance of God's will, he turned his distress into a more eager yearning toward what Aquinas has called the true *patria,* which is not of this world.

His trials were not over. The more we advance in life and approach death, the more the terrestrial horizon narrows and pain sharpens. In his country home our *palladin,* no longer young though always at his post of combat, felt profoundly the pangs of solitude and the absence of human tenderness. Neither of the two surviving daughters remained at the hearthside. Luce be-

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came a nun of the Order of the Visitation, and her father thanked God for having accepted the offering of that little lamp "consuming itself on the altar." Her sister, Agnès, left also, following her husband, the Commandant Pierroux, to a distant garrison. His crucifix was the only companion of the solitary widower.

"This little corner near a window," he wrote, "is no longer filled by the dear presence. Now all is empty. . . . What a frightful emptiness! . . . I am content, however, because I have confidence in the Master. . . . God will refill the vacancy. . . . But how crushing was the moment after her departure! I thought that I no longer had anything of my own!"

Nevertheless, the devastating crisis, the wound by which one perishes or emerges the greater therefor, he had later to bear. This was a blow to his most deeply rooted convictions, a brusque shock to his religious enthusiasm, which remained strong despite serious injury. The representative of Christ on earth, who up to then had treated him like a son, Pius IX, his supreme defender against powerful adversaries, had disapproved and rejected him—and this when he, Veuillot, had just defended the Vatican's cause with extraordinary energy.

This is what happened.

Dispossessed of his kingdom and a prisoner in his palace, the Pope had first directed to the conscience of the world a vehement appeal for restitution. Immediately Veuillot took the field. But monarchs and leaders of the people leagued together to persuade the Vatican that to demand "temporal power" would risk inflaming the powder-barrel in Europe. Catholics were divided on the question; "liberals" and ultramontanes" opposed each other.

After having accomplished his duty by appealing "for the conditions necessary to his liberty of action and to the government of the Church," Pius IX decided to preserve, at his own expense, the peace in Europe. His spiritual rights he maintained against those fearing the papal power, but he also checked the fervidness of his vindicators who would have compromised him. A fair remonstrance was addressed to both parties, the proud liberals and the over-zealous ultramontanes. The most conspicuous of the latter was Veuillot, with his newspaper, *L'Univers*. "To the one I counsel humility," the Pontiff warned, "to the other charity. Union I recommend to all."

This rebuff to the position maintained by Veuillot's paper, *L'Univers*, touched the depths of his soul. He quaffed the cup of bitterness. Of his grief we see traces in his correspondence. "The first moment was very hard and full of terrible perplexities," he confessed. But again prayer and an act of abandonment into the hands of God saved him.

"The way to make great strides in progress," as he expressed it in a moving paradox, "is to get on one's knees. . . . The Pope does the will of God, even when it seems to us that God would not have wished it." And so by grace he quickly regained his composure. "Our duty is to submit. Catholics are the children of obedience." Without hesitation, he obeyed.

Later he thus admirably summed up this ordeal: "In short, this condemnation has been as a blessing which entered my room by breaking the window."

Today such differences as marked the famous quarrel between the liberals and the ultramontanes have almost completely disappeared. In the two adverse camps obedience has prevailed, thanks to "the unity of command realized in the Church through the *ex cathedra* infallibility of the Pope." There must be no parties, no diverse labels or rival opinions in the legion of the faithful. They are Roman Catholics; it is much and it is all.

Veuillot was considered the leader of the ultramontanes; and his enemies called him illiberal, anti-liberal and fanatic. If, however, I may be permitted to offer summarily a conclusion derived from facts, I would say that through his pen he helped the expansion of genuine Christianity in the modern world; and this, chiefly, by opposing a false and distorted liberalism. Only on the ruins of this lamentable doctrine could the authentic flower of the gospel be cultivated so as to perfume and sweeten the world today.

Veuillot did not wait long to receive the reward of his fidelity in the ultramontane trouble. In censuring him Pius IX, who knew well and loved this faithful man, had not withdrawn from him either his affection or his confidence. The following year, the Sovereign Pontiff with open arms exclaimed, "Here you are, thou brave and excellent Veuillot! Always fighting, always young!"

And again and again he fought, "always young," like a knight of old. Several months later, *L'Univers*, alone of the French press, dared to publish the encyclical, "Etsi Multa Luctiosa," which, as might be expected, thundered against the Bismarckian *Kulturkampf*. Fearing diplomatic complications with Germany, the Prime Minister of France, the Duc de Broglie, suspended the newspaper for two months. But in a special Brief, Pius IX solemnly congratulated Veuillot for "being in trouble because his efforts were boldly consecrated to the propagation of the good."

This was one of the last public gestures of Louis Veuillot. It is not surprising that at the death of this Catholic, humble and disciplined before the ecclesiastical powers but fearless in the face of the enemies of truth, Leo XIII, the illustrious successor of Pius IX on the throne of Saint Peter, in his public eulogy of this noble servant of Christ, exalted him to the company of the "Lay Fathers of the Church."

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# PHILIP II AND SPAIN

By WILLIAM THOMAS WALSH

IF I COMMENT, as I do reluctantly, on Mr. Philip Burnham's article, "Spain's Great Century," in THE COMMONWEAL of January 28, it must not be with reference to his unfavorable judgment on my "Philip II" as such, but with regard to his attitude on far more important matters, on which I fear he has misinformed readers of THE COMMONWEAL. It is not to be tolerated that Catholic scholarship, Catholic history and even Catholic dogma should be appraised, in a journal calling itself Catholic, on Protestant principles born of prejudice and misconception.

This, whatever his good intentions, is what Mr. Burnham has done. The source of his ideas and methods is apparent in the very plan of his article. He imagined, perhaps, that he was going to review two books on the same subject. Actually he used the one he preferred only as a club with which to lambaste the other; and his praises of the non-Catholic writer are revealing as to the standard he intends to set up: his author is "not prejudiced," he is "loath to voice prophecy or explain any specific theory of history. . . . There are no prearranged theories to hang dates on." He "does not try *overtly* [my italics here and throughout] to draw lessons from the record of Spain's . . . preeminence." His "broadness of outlook is limited by no severe secularism, and one may say of course by no nationalistic blindness." Finally, his evidence, in the words of Mr. Burnham, "leads inescapably to an appreciation of the Catholic Church as leaven for that greatness [Spain's] and as an institution exhibiting holy characteristics and marred by far fewer human blemishes than the ordinary northern historian of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation [*sic*] would permit one to realize." Well!

Since this is the measuring stick he proceeds to apply to a Catholic work, I will pass over his bad logic, as when he challenges my assertion that Philip II "had against him in singular unity all the elements of the international and mystical opposition to the Church of Christ," on the ground that "the Pope, for instance, was no more than lukewarm"; his inaccuracy, as in his complaint that I give but a "trivial explanation" of "the partition" of Palestine, of which there is not a word in my whole book, nor need there be; and his gross unfairness in putting into my mouth the strange words, "The forces of modernity. . . . They are the voices of the Antichrist," and commenting, "This is important, because it seems to identify Christianity with the Christendom of the Middle Ages"—when the whole force of the passage he ridicules (pages 716-717) is to prove exactly the opposite, with the phrase "*children* of the Antichrist" used obviously as Newman applied a similar one to the spirit of Liberalism. I will pass over that and come to the first major issue, which is this: that despite Mr. Burnham's reluctance to have historians "voice any specific philosophy of history," at least *overtly*, especially where the "imponderable" element of religion is concerned, he himself displays an unfortunate bias for the so-called economic interpretation of history which the enemies of the Catholic Church—notably Communists—have used so craftily against her. He is displeased because I do not attach the importance he does to economic elements—the *technique* of banking, trade routes, the *alcabala*, "the economic decline of the Mediterranean coast," and so on. When I present a mass of evidence to prove that such influences, though not without effect, have been greatly exaggerated, that even the economic was not *merely* economic (as in usury, even when dignified by the name of banking), that the real struggle was the religious conflict for and against the Catholic Church, he does not judge my testimony by accepted rules of evidence, but in the main ignores it; and though he grants that the "effectiveness" of religion can "be inferred with admitted tentativeness on the basis of its fruits, an empirical conclusion from evidence," he vitiates this concession by shying away from the "fruits" presented, by jibing at the notion of armed conflict for and against Christ; he cannot stomach "this tangibly conceived drama, this identification of certain known human groups with supernatural forces"; he, for one, will not believe that "anything Left is satanic." In the stead of argument he more than intimates that I have reached my conclusions, not on the basis of evidence, but by resort to prophecy, to the fatuous claims of some personal revelation, to "a sort of inverted secularism" (whatever that may be), to the deluded arrogance of inventing my own theory of the continuity of history, "with the intermediate constructions of logic or emotion taken for granted."

The ignorance underlying these assumptions is depressing. Doesn't he know that the theory for which I find so much evidence in sixteenth-century history has been asserted by Bossuet, Louis Bertrand, Benigni, Chesterton, Belloc, Guilday. By Balmes, Menendez y Pelayo and all the best Spanish historians, from Cabrera to our day? By Newman, both as an Anglican and as a Catholic? It is, in fact, a Catholic philosophy of history, very generally supported, as I intimate in "Philip II" (page 240) by the Popes, not only in the Middle Ages but in our own times.

The Holy See has never shared Mr. Burnham's aversion to a "tangibly conceived drama" for and against the Church, or his fondness for the economic theory of history. Pius IX insisted that all the worst evils of the modern world, including Communism, grew out of the sixteenth-century conflict of Protestantism against the Church of Christ. Leo XIII was only one of nine modern Popes who placed all Freemasons, without exception, definitely among the goats on earth, as distinguished from the sheep. Pius XI, though dealing amply, as all the world knows, with economic grievances, has nevertheless shown that these resulted in great part from the international anti-Catholic conspiracy which now uses them as pretexts for revolution; and surely he has emphasized the need of interpreting history from a spiritual, not an economic, point of view. For example, Pope Pius attributes the rapid spread of Communism to three causes: (1) "We must remember that the way had been already prepared for it by the religious and moral destitution in which wage-earners had been left by Liberal economics"; (2) "a

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propaganda so truly diabolical that the world has perhaps never witnessed its like before. *It is directed from one common center.* It is shrewdly adapted to the varying condition of diverse peoples. It has at its disposal great financial resources, gigantic organizations, international congresses, and countless trained workers. It makes use of pamphlets and reviews, of cinema, theatre and radio, of schools, and even universities"; and (3) "the conspiracy of silence on the part of a large section of the non-Catholic press of the world. . . . This silence is due in part to short-sighted political policy, and is favored by *various occult forces* which *for a long time* have been working for the overthrow of the Christian Social Order" ("Divini Redemptoris").

He told the Spanish refugees that they were victims, not of the decline of the Mediterranean coast, nor of the *alcabala,* nor of "wrath over a social set-up," but of a "truly satanic hatred of God and against humanity redeemed by Him." He warned against "the insidiousness . . . of seeking common ground with Catholics, and this on the basis of a distinction between ideology and application, between ideas and action, between the economic and moral order." In Spain "a satanic preparation has relighted . . . that flame of hatred and savage persecution which has been confessedly reserved for the Catholic Church and the Catholic religion as being the one real obstacle in the way of those forces which have already given a sample and a measure of themselves in subversive attacks on every kind of order from Russia to China, from Mexico to South America. Such trials and preparations have been preceded and unfailingly accompanied by a universal, persistent and most astute propaganda." Spain offers "a lesson precious and highly salutary for all who do not care to close their eyes and grope in the dark. . . . It is certain and evident that wherever war is being made on religion and the Catholic Church and her beneficent influence . . . that war is in alliance with the forces of subversion, by these same forces and for the same disastrous purpose," and he warns against a "fictitious and insincere distinction between the Catholic religion and 'religious politics.'"

Does Mr. Burnham imagine these "forces of subversion," these occult groups all united against the Church of Christ, date back only to the establishment of the modern banking system or the industrial revolution? The conspiracy has continued "for centuries." If it was less highly organized at the time of Philip II than now, it was clearly discernible in the mass of evidence I give, and the elements were much the same. Naturally the "occult forces" have covered their traces as much as possible. The fictitious reputation of William of Orange is one of many examples. Far from being a great apostle of democracy and of freedom of thought and worship, he was a rich, immoral, profligate man, heavily in debt to Jewish bankers; leader of an oath-bound secret organization, in communication with the upstart Protestant aristocracy of England, the Huguenot aristocrats of France, the German Lutheran barons, and the Jewish international banker who dominated the foreign policy of the Sultan of Turkey. It was at William's request, and through this banker's connivance, that the Grand Turk launched the fleet that Don John of Austria shattered at Lepanto. William had no interest in the proletariat, no real religious principles, no belief in religious tolerance as such, and no objection to the existing political and social orders, except that he wanted to control them himself. When he attained power in Holland, he taxed the people far more heavily than Alba did with the *alcabala* that weighs so grievously on Mr. Burnham. Does Mr. Burnham challenge all this evidence? He does not even consider it. He pounces on one sentence about William of Orange, and adds, "It is apparently impossible to be wrathful at a social set-up without hating Christianity." Thus he lends oblique aid to the subversive conspiracy against the truth of history without making a forthright denial of the evidence he cannot refute. My whole book is an account of how the intrigue and propaganda of subversive forces opposed the Church and Philip II in Germany, in France, in England, in Poland, and in Spain, by methods strikingly similar to those described by Pope Pius XI, until the unity of Christendom was broken, and the center of international finance, moving first to Antwerp and then to London, laid the foundation for the triumph of Protestant England and the isolation of Catholic Spain. All this is met by Mr. Burnham with the unsupported assertion that I give but a trivial account of "the Reformation in general and by countries," the rise of England and the fall of Spain!

Similarly, he conveys the impression that I have gone out of my way to report irresponsible boasts and accusations concerning the Jews; but he prudently avoids saying what these irresponsible accounts are. What better sources can he suggest than Dr. Graetz, author of the six-volume standard history of his people, who describes their power in Turkey? or Dr. Lucien Wolf, who cites contemporary accounts of the international Jewish spy-ring that kept England informed of Spanish naval and commercial activity? or the *Transactions* of the Jewish Historical Society of England? or the extensive *Revue des études juives?* And why was he so alert to resent Jewish accounts of the Jewish opposition to the Pope and to Philip II, and so blind to my reference to the splendid and merciful conduct of Sinan the Jew at Tunis—I call him "the chivalrous Jew"—and the great Catholic Jews, Reinoso, friend of Pope Pius V, and Lainez the Jesuit? and my explanation of the evil results of the expulsion of the Jews on all Christendom, and the inevitable failure of persecution (page 90)? Why didn't he cull such things as these, of which there are many more: "the assimilation of thousands of Jews who enriched the Spanish mind and culture with a new vitality and depth" (page 90) . . . "the wickedness of Jew-baiting" (page 240) . . . "the shocking holocaust" of the burning of Isaac of Troyes. . . . "The heroism of some of the victims makes one regret the more that they were not in Italy, where the Pope or the hierarchy would undoubtedly have protected them" (page 245). . . . Philip II "knew and employed too many *excellent men of Jewish ancestry* to be taken in by *any stupid and vicious theory of 'Nordic' or 'Aryan' superiority.*" . . . "Let us be honest, and divide the sorry credit between bad Jews and bad Christians" (page 250).

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This is not the language of a Jew-baiter. If the Jews appear everywhere in the story of the sixteenth century, I didn't put them there, as Mr. Burnham seems to imagine; they were there. Must Christian historians record nothing of them except what Mr. Burnham calls their "wonderfulness"? Must we write of no sins save those of Catholics, lay and clerical? Must we like Litvinov because we rejoice in Menuhin?

Finally, Mr. Burnham complains that " the whole force of the biography leads to the position that there are no degrees in the possession of truth, that grace is restricted to the visible body of the Church, that the Light does, in fact, not enlighten every man that comes into this world." With evident disapproval he quotes: "Philip II so clearly perceived that Christ in this world dwelt in the one holy and apostolic Catholic Church of Rome, and nowhere else, and that the salvation of men depended literally, as he had plainly said, upon their acceptance of this fact . . ." and observes, "This and the whole book might readily seem more than a statement of the dogma that outside the Church there is no salvation."

I am not quite sure what he is trying to say here. How can a book "lead toward" a dogma and at the same time be "more than a statement" of it? If his words mean anything, they mean that he suspects me of holding that "outside the Church there is no salvation," and does he challenge that dogma—for he triumphantly quotes against me a passage from "The Catholic Encyclopedia" commencing, "The foolish and unchristian maxim that those who are outside the Church must for that very reason be eternally lost is no legitimate conclusion from Catholic dogma"? The latitude of his own interpretation is indicated by the violence he does to the context of St. John's Gospel, and by his irritation over my statement that "Spanish Catholicism was Christian and English Protestantism was not," and his complaint that in my book, "Non-Catholic Christians are treated as undoubted, if perhaps misunderstanding, anti-Christians."

His attitude on this question is Protestant.

I am under no obligation to defend myself save by a disclaimer from the charge that my book "leads toward" propositions I never held or expressed. And since I did not assert, in my own person, even the dogma that "outside the Church there is no salvation," I might be excused if I declined to debate that point. But for Mr. Burnham's sake I will acknowledge at once that I literally hold the opinion of Philip II to which he objects so much, and that I hope he will discover he holds it himself, when he thinks the matter over more coolly. For this is nothing more or less than the official teaching of the Catholic Church.

Has he quoted "The Catholic Encyclopedia" correctly? The opening sentence, as copied above, is a false statement, if the words "the Church" mean what they mean in the dogma, "Outside the Church there is no salvation." I don't find the passage; but I do find in "The Catholic Encyclopedia," Volume III, pages 752-753, a better exposition of the whole matter:

"Union with the Church is not merely one of various means by which salvation may be obtained: it is the only means. This doctrine of the absolute necessity of union with the Church was taught in explicit terms by Christ. . . . Saint Paul is equally explicit. . . . It is instructive to observe that this doctrine has been proclaimed at every period of the Church's history."

Protestants have often attacked this dogma of the Church, because they did not or would not understand what the Church meant by it. If I may presume to summarize the interpretation on which all theologians agree, it is this: A person outside the visible body of the Catholic Church may be saved if, believing in a personal God Who will punish sin and reward virtue, he is invincibly ignorant of the necessity of belonging to the Church, if he is validly baptized, if he follows in good faith the light given him, and if he dies free from mortal sin, or, having committed mortal sin, makes a perfect act of contrition or of love before death. The charitable breadth of the Church's interpretation is indicated by her including among the baptized not only those baptized validly with water, but those baptized through desire, *in voto,* through martyrdom, or merely through desire explicit or implicit. This, however, does not invalidate the strictly defined conditions mentioned above; nor can it be denied that without the help of the sacraments which the Church alone possesses, they are difficult to meet. Protestants may be saved, yes, and in great numbers; Jews and Mohammedans and even pagans may be saved; but if so, they are saved, not as Protestants, Jews, Mohammedans or pagans, but as members of the soul of the Catholic Church, the one true Church of Christ. They are saved, through the merits of Christ, as invincibly ignorant Catholics in good faith. But when a man thus to be saved calls himself a Protestant (for example), he is opposing, by that very fact, the claims and the mission of the one true Roman Catholic Church, of Christ.

If Mr. Burnham had understood these distinctions, which are implicit in my book (though I did not feel called upon to state them, any more than to define mortal sin or other terms widely understood), he might perhaps have grasped the Catholic philosophy of history, which conceives of a tangible drama for and against the Church. As I showed repeatedly from facts, the enemies of the Church were strangely united in action all over the world, though divided in belief, while the Catholics, then as now, were united in dogma, but sadly unable to act in unison—and this great tragedy seemed constantly to illustrate the lament of Our Lord that "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." I hoped I had made it plain that many, perhaps most of the people on the anti-Catholic side were deceived by the astute propaganda of the children of this world. This, in the light of Catholic principles, should have exempted me from what amounts to a charge that I consigned them all to hell. And my insistence on the aid that some Catholics were always lending to the enemy, through weakness, stupidity, misinformation or malice, might have entitled me to the benefit of any doubt as to whether I imagined them all to be saints—to say nothing of the sins I recorded of some of the more orthodox champions. The fact is, I did not concern myself with the spiritual destiny of

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individuals on either side. What I saw clearly, and still see, was that there were two sides, one Christian, the other anti-Christian. There was the visible body of the Church, and there was the visible union of subversive forces seeking its destruction. This, I must insist, is the legitimate concern of a historian; not the "imponderable" overlappings of the *soul* of the Church with what someone has called "the mystical body of the Antichrist." It is Mr. Burnham, and not I, who meddles with these matters which are properly the business of the theologian, rather than the historian or the critic.

## DISARMING HISTORY BOOKS

By BERNHARD RAGNER

IF WAR with its horrors and stupidities is ever to be banished from our globe, the history books of our children must first be effectively "disarmed," demobilized, and the venom of war propaganda extracted from them. False "certitudes" and tendentious legends in textbooks must be cancelled out; "massive accusations" against entire nations and peoples, eschewed; ancient fables, so often used to excite passion and inflame prejudice, deflated or exploded, and replaced by the objective facts, stated simply, with authorities cited. Finally, more attention must be given to peace-time cooperation and progress, less to antagonism and war.

These are the principles by which cultural disarmament and peaceful relations between France and Germany can be achieved, according to a courageous, clear-sighted group of history professors, from both sides of the Rhine, which has compiled, after three years of patient effort and research, a series of practical suggestions for attaining this end. Perhaps, the progress made so far in this direction is not very great and rather slow but it has been great enough, and significant enough, to encourage these professors, from Leipzig, Berlin and Paris, to continue their self-imposed task of long-range international conciliation.

It has been said that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. Similarly, these French and German historians are convinced that the victory for peace between their two countries can, should and must be won in the *lycées* of Paris and the *gymnasia* of Berlin, also in the universities of Besançon and Bonn, Stuttgart and Toulouse, to mention only four. To win this victory of ten or twenty years hence, they have enlisted themselves, with many of their colleagues, in a sincere and scientific endeavor to remove hatred from the textbooks of the Third Reich and the Third Republic.

Although unofficial, in order to assure its complete independence, this professional group has worked, from the very beginning, with the knowledge and consent of the French and German governments. At all times, the educational authorities of both countries have been kept informed of the methods used, the meetings held, the problems discussed and the agreements reached. In Berlin as in Paris, the National Associations of History Professors delegated their presidents, Professor Morizet for France, Dr. Reimann for Germany, to take the lead in this movement to de-militarize the history manuals of both countries. Obviously, in the judgment of historical facts, particularly those of recent date, complete unanimity was not attained and could not be expected. Certainly each member of this mixed commission is a distinguished historian, but he is also a loyal and patriotic citizen of France or Germany, with all that this implies of mental baggage, background and outlook. But the miracle is that agreement, or near agreement, was reached on more than a dozen vital topics, ranging from Louis XIV and Frederick the Great to the Locarno Pact. In a fifty-page report, covering thirty aspects of Franco-German relations, a report remarkable for its courtesy, clarity and candor (although dealing with technical problems of history-writing), these professors set forth and summarize their findings. Printed in French and German, this document is to be widely circulated in both countries to teachers, professors and writers of history, also to educational journals. It is too technical to interest the general public, but if the recommendations it contains are put into effect, it will inevitably influence the general public of tomorrow. That, after all, is its primary purpose.

Most significant, certainly, is the recommendation, unanimously adopted, which is addressed to fellow historians and publishing houses; it indicates, in explicit fashion, how controversial matters should be presented so as to serve the cause of comprehension and peace. To facilitate friendlier relations between France and Germany, to strive for "literary disarmament," this Franco-German commission of historians earnestly urges all textbook authors:

(1) To purify their works of every reminiscence of war propaganda; to abstain from all injurious expressions regarding the adversary; to recognize the patriotism, devotion and courage of soldiers on both sides.

(2) To treat thorny, perplexing problems (such as responsibility for the World War) with necessary calmness; to avoid excess language and polemical formulas; to refrain from making massive accusations against governments and peoples.

(3) To be scrupulously fair on controversial issues, such as "atrocities" in Belgium, by quoting testimony from both sides. When interpretations differ, when the nature of the facts is in dispute, to present all viewpoints impartially, clearly and completely.

(4) To acquaint themselves with, and to take into account, the objections made abroad to textbooks now in use, particularly criticisms emanating from ex-enemy countries.

(5) To give adequate emphasis to the periods (such as 1815-1859, 1878-1884, and 1894-1898) when a peaceful spirit animated Franco-German relations, even permitting useful cooperation in extra-European matters.

(6) To distinguish carefully between what was known of an event when it happened (the Sarajevo plot, for example, in 1914, and the manifold incidents which followed it) and what is known today. On this subject, the textbooks of both countries come in for criticism, the German for exaggerating and the French for decreasing the responsibility of the Belgrade government.

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In this manner, no fewer than thirty aspects of the Franco-German problem receive attention. Our mixed commission does no boasting; it does not attempt to unveil the future; and yet, between the lines, we are able to read its reasoned conviction that if tomorrow's history books, in France and Germany, are constructed according to these specifications, the prospects for peace will be greatly increased. The commission does not hope that the textbooks studied in Cologne and Coblentz will be identical with those used in Caen and Cahors; it confesses that historical truth is not simple but exceedingly complex; that certain facts, events and policies may be viewed and judged from different standpoints. Indeed, it recognizes (although it does not use this figure of speech) that, in many cases, it is not a question of White versus Black, but a certain shade of Grey versus another shade.

All the while, the commission insists, with robust faith, that divergences of opinion can be presented with moderation, with honesty, with fairness and with a desire to help ancient grudges to vanish. It seeks to liberate Raoul and Johann, Elsa and Yvonne from the half-truths and the poisoned historical concepts which caused their fathers and grandfathers to hate, fear and sometimes to fight each other.

To show that the commission is both able and willing to practise its own preaching, we can quote Article XX of its report. This article deals with the outbreak of the World War and reads as follows: "The commission is agreed (1) that the documents now available do not permit us to attribute to any government or people, as of 1914, a premeditated desire for a European war; (2) that there existed currents of bellicose public opinion in the different states. In textbooks on history, it will be wise to limit oneself to making note of the fact that distrust was at its highest point; that in governing circles the idea of an inevitable war was prevalent; that everyone attributed thoughts of aggression to the other; that everyone accepted the risk of war."

Another example is Article X of the report which reads: "The commission is agreed (1) that French textbooks often exaggerate the importance of the Pan-German movement; like all active minorities, the Pan-German group was able, in diverse circumstances, to wield an influence over public opinion; but it did not inspire the policies of statesmen in any permanent fashion; (2) that German textbooks exaggerate the importance of 'the idea of revenge' in France; this idea of revenge did exist, in a section of public opinion, during the years following the war of 1870, but it declined constantly after 1890 and from that time on did not play an appreciable rôle."

As these two quotations indicate (more than a score could be added, if space permitted), the entire report is animated by a spirit of objectivity, of sincerity, and a desire to understand. True, there are disagreements which will only disappear with time, but reports such as this one will aid mightily in the process. For this document is primarily a plea for honest history writing; it wishes the historian to be a scientist, frankly stating his findings after critical research, and not a propagandist pleading for a cause. M. Gaston Martin, former French deputy, hails the report as "a great victory of impartiality and courage over prejudice and sentimentality."

The work accomplished thus far by this commission (as he remarks) is "beautiful in itself and worthy of every praise." It is not enough, however; the now static report must become dynamic. The next step is to transform its enlightened suggestions into living, human fact; the ideas set forth, the mental attitudes prescribed, must be planted deeply in the hearts and minds of the school children of France and Germany so that in the years to come, they may reap a harvest of better understanding and good-will. What obstacles will be encountered, how they will be overcome and when, what will be the reaction of Hamburg and Cherbourg, Munich and Marseilles, only time can tell. At all events, a first and necessary step has been taken. It is only a beginning, but a good one and, to quote M. Gaston Martin once again, *Esperons et attendons.* . . . Let us hope and wait.

## *This Exile Is Not March:*

March should be high whiteness
abroad in the sky, one gull
riding windily the gold

drift of the late daylight,
crying the poplars' hopes
above men's sluggard smoky hearths,
above the ravelled snows,

of leafing crystal-crispened brighter airs
first with the birds on boughs,
then bud, bud, buds, their blossoms,
then the leaves—not this dry

wind in the live oaks and the heights
of the eucalyptus, a few dead
leaves caught in the dead long grass,
jay-cry from the pines, and the sun's

last level light now petalling
only the motor-headlights
with tufts of the last brightness.
March should be white

plums alien to the eye at night
and wings forward to the straining heart
caught in the night wind's cry as in a tide
swept fiercely upward into strangeness and the hush:

March should be by day
the melting of the snows before the sorry
tags of the winter's flesh and winter's
squandered, winter's sunken eye,

absolving before the humbled
littleness of wintered man, the newness, all
the newness again of all his meanest,
all his ancient, risen ways.

RAYMOND E. F. LARSSON.

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# Seven Days' Survey

***The Church.***—The Holy Father's mission intention for next month is "that the students of Catholic schools be taught about the missions." The first thing is to pray for the missions that God will touch "the hearts of the pagans to soften them and to draw them to Him." * * * The 2,000 delegates from 70 Catholic high schools and colleges to the seventh Students' Spiritual Leadership conference at St. Louis adopted a resolution of sympathy for the Jewish peoples now persecuted in various countries of Europe. They also urged nation-wide extension of consumer cooperatives and suggested that study groups be started in each school to prepare for the formation of student cooperatives. * * * The Laetare Medal of Notre Dame University for 1938 was awarded to Dr. Irvin Abell of Louisville, Ky., president-elect of the American Medical Association. * * * The Urban College of Propaganda at Rome, which prepares missionaries for the priesthood, now enrolls 233 students from 37 countries; the largest contingents are from China, Australia and India. * * * The nineteenth annual Catholic Charities appeal in New York for the 370 parishes in the archdiocese has enlisted 20,000 volunteer workers; the goal is $1,300,000. * * * "The Obligation of Catholics in the Present World Crisis" will be discussed at the twelfth annual conference of the Catholic Association for International Peace, Easter Monday and Tuesday, April 18 and 19. The general theme, "International Peace through Economic Justice," will be taken up in detail at round-table discussions and general meetings. Delegates from the nine Regional Student Peace Federations will meet in conference on the final day. * * * The Vespers of Passion Sunday were rendered at the Church of St. Vincent Ferrer in New York, April 3, by a joint choir of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music and the Schola Cantorum of the Liturgical Arts Society.

***The Nation.***—The Executive Reorganization bill, having passed through the Senate largely as the administration wanted it, was being examined by a House committee. The Senate bill eliminates pre-auditing by a congressional employee, the Controller General, and sets up the office of an Auditor General, dependent on the legislature and devoted exclusively to post-auditing. The House apparently wanted to keep some sort of a controller for pre-auditing with powers and duties indicated in the law but dependent on the executive, as well as to set up the new auditing office for post-auditing. * * * The $549,000,000 navy bill was passed by the Senate in the form reported by committee. The House voted a $448,116,280 army bill, thus giving the military $32,853,130 more than last year. * * * After announcing on March 27 that it will no longer carry on its program of purchasing silver monthly from Mexico (about 5,000,000 ounces), the Treasury cut its buying price for foreign silver in general from $.45 to $.44. The world silver market fell, and ideas of monetization or partial monetization of the white metal receded further. * * * The dollar value of sales on all registered securities exchanges in February dropped to $794,078,054, the lowest figure for a month since the SEC began its work in March, 1935. It was the first time the figure fell below $1,000,000,000. Prices in the stock market continued to fall sharply during the last week of March and the federal government indicated extreme interest in the matter, the President being said to have kept in constant telephone contact with the capital while he was vacationing in the South. * * * The House Rules Committee took the Senate resolution asking for a joint inquiry into TVA and broadened it to prepare the way for a thorough investigation of the whole agency and its activities.

***The Wide World.***—Premier Blum told a group of thirty Radical Socialists that he would submit his financial proposals to Parliament on April 1 and that if the texts were not adopted by April 4 the Bourse would be closed. Delegates of 30,000 striking metal workers announced that they had found a basis for settlement after conferences with government officials. * * * Nineteen high Soviet government and party officials of the Kazakhstan Republic were executed. The Council of People's Commissars ordered a purge of the Northern Sea Route Administration, under whose auspices last year Soviet aviators flew over the North Pole to America and Soviet scientists established an ice-floe camp at the North Pole. * * * General Franco's advance to the Mediterranean slowed down in order to organize communications, bring up munitions, and supplies, and fortify captured heights protecting the Nationalist flanks. Fierce fighting was reported in the vicinity of Lerida, key city to Catalonia. * * * Ireland's first attempt to elect a vocational Senate as envisaged by the new Constitution failed when most of the successful candidates returned were those on avowedly party tickets. The Irish Labor party boycotted the elections. * * * The United States, Great Britain and France invoked the escalator clause of the 1936 naval treaty and thus freed themselves to match the super-battleships Japan is now assumed to be building. The new limit on the size of battleships will probably be 41,000 tons.

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***Government-Business.***—Before leaving for Georgia, the President directed the Treasury to examine all the suggestions that have come to Washington dealing with the government's part in loans to industry. The main question was whether private credit procedures should be stream-lined or whether government should enter deeper in the field. Some proposals called upon the government to buy up securities of business. Small business men generally said that in banks the collateral requirements are too severe and the length of loans too short. It was sug-

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gested that SEC regulations be relaxed to permit easier capital financing, and equity banking was proposed, permitting commercial banks to participate in the capitalization of small companies. Main consideration, however, was given to the rôle of the RFC. Senator Glass introduced a bill to widen RFC activities which President Roosevelt supported. The maturity of RFC loans to industry would be lengthened, and the corporation would be permitted to make loans to any category of industry. The RFC has about $1,500,000,000 at present available for loans. Majority leader Barkley of the Senate, speaking about the relationship of government and business, made a number of challenging points: "Every law that has ever been enacted by Congress to curb or regulate the conduct of business in this country has been enacted at the request or demand of the consuming public or some branch of business that needed protection. . . . The man who does not recognize in this complex age the duty and obligation of the government to protect legitimate business from unfair methods and practises designed to foster monopoly is dwelling in a world of unreality. The trend of legislation has been for the purpose of protecting the small industry, the small business, from the ruthless methods of those who would destroy it by methods not recognized in any code of ethics applicable to legitimate business practises."

***Chinese Resistance.***—All week a fierce battle raged in southern Shantung, with both armies suffering heavy casualties. The sparsity of Japanese reports was taken as usual to indicate that they had been set back and this impression was strengthened by reports of huge troop movements from Shansi and Manchukuo. A few successful Japanese counter-attacks were reported. The Tokyo expeditionary forces in North China have been swelled to 320,000 men. As we go to press 50,000 troops trained by the Soviets are massing on the border between Outer Mongolia, a land in the Russian sphere of influence, and Manchukuo. They are occupying heavily fortified positions which have just been completed on that distant frontier. In communized Hopeh the Japanese troops were reported to have cut a wide swath of terror, wiping out hundreds of villages and liquidating many of the inhabitants. The Kuomintang or Chinese Nationalist party met in national congress at Hongkong. With the passage of a national power act, empowering the government to take over the Japanese public utilities, the Tokyo Diet closed its sessions after enacting 76 of the 86 bills proposed by the government. Among them was the National Mobilization Bill: totalitarian law which is the counterpart of our May Bill still to be decided on.

***Senate and Taxes.***—The Senate Finance Committee found much to object to in the House revenue bill it was preparing for floor action. Abandoning the administration principle and reversing House action, the Finance Committee struck out the undistributed profits tax by a vote of 17-4, and wrote in instead a flat 18 percent tax on the net income of corporations except for those whose net income is less than $25,000. For the present capital gains tax with its graduated rates based on periods of time, a flat tax was substituted similar to that in the 1924 Revenue Act. The House's new estate and gift taxes were also cut out. They had been strongly condemned by Governor Lehman of New York as drying up necessary sources of state income. Further following the tactic of appeasing business, the committee lengthened the period of grace granted personal holding companies from two to three years. The clause in the House bill assuring publicity for all salaries of $75,000 and above was retained. After listening to Secretaries Hull and Wallace, the Senate Finance Committee struck out various amendments which would have raised excise taxes on various, chiefly agricultural, imports. In this manner Senator Harrison tried to encourage business into greater confidence and activity, but it was a question how the House of Representatives would react to the policy when the bill is returned for their further action.

***Peace.***—Representatives of forty-two American peace organizations, meeting in Washington for a Conference on World Economic Cooperation, issued a program which called for support of the reciprocal trade agreements with other nations designed to lower trade barriers, for final settlement of the war debts, for the establishment and maintenance of stabilized exchange rates, for a world pact of economic collaboration, and for measures which would provide equal access among nations to the trade and resources of colonial areas and thus reduce demands for colonial expansion by European powers. Recognizing that the American economic system is working badly, the conference proposed that in the interest of peace an attempt be made to restore order and health to American domestic economy by steps to attain social and economic security. Public works for non-military purposes were advocated, as well as participation in the economic work of the League of Nations. "The fact that munitions are being accumulated at the moment," the report stated, "rather than being shot off, hardly serves in this instance to distinguish the present economic state from that of actual war going on. If peace is to follow, bold policies are going to be necessary, for a transition must somehow be made. Energy now going into armaments must be diverted into housing, education or road-building, or other genuine peacetime activities." While the conference agreed on recommendations for economic measures to maintain world peace, it disagreed sharply on the question of American participation in collective international efforts to outlaw war. One group favored a policy of isolation, while another equally powerful group desired American cooperation with other nations in an endeavor to curb aggressive countries.

***Colonel House.***—One of the unique figures in American politics died March 28 at his home, 104 East 68th Street, New York. Mr. Edward Mandell House was called "the man of mystery" and the "Warwick" of the Wilson administration. He was the intimate adviser of Woodrow Wilson before and during his terms of office, and from 1911 to 1919 he played a rôle unparalleled in the

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history of the United States. He was a private citizen without desire for office, whose efforts in behalf of Mr. Wilson helped make the latter President and whose studies for and suggestions to the President were effective in creating Cabinets, devising legislation, pursuing war and conducting negotiations for peace. As the representative of the President he became known as the "other self" of Mr. Wilson—so much so that during the Peace Conference at Paris the statesmen of foreign powers sought conferences with him instead of with the President, a circumstance which, it was said at the time, contributed to a break in the friendship of the two men or at least a cessation of their intimacy. In fact, this "other self" relationship of Mr. Wilson and Colonel House was so great that almost all that can be told of Colonel House concerned Mr. Wilson. From England came the tribute of Lord Tyrell, one of the ranking officials of the Foreign Office in the war years, who referred to Colonel House as "one of the most internationally minded men of the pre-war period. He was always a loyal and unwavering supporter of President Wilson and it is to be regretted that his advice was not taken oftener during the Peace Conference." Paul Hymans, Belgian delegate to the Peace Conference, asserted: "I had numerous conferences with him in February, 1919, regarding reparations. He realized it was indispensable for Belgium to obtain from Germany immediate payment of the first instalment of war damages in order to start Belgium's economic restoration."

***The Moral of Austria.***—In a recent article in the London *Tablet,* Christopher Dawson asserts that no Catholic can regard the passing of Austria with indifference because the state which took its form and historical character from the struggle to defend Catholicism against the Reformation and Christianity against the Turk, and which has been for so many centuries the embodiment of Catholic culture in Central Europe, has ceased to exist and with it a whole epoch in the history of Christendom has ended. The reunion of Austria with the body of Germany was in the logic of history; but while admitting the legitimacy of the end, it is a very different matter to approve the means by which that end has been obtained. If Europe wants peace, Mr. Dawson continues, it must face the realities of the situation. It must admit the failure of the Versailles settlement. It must accept the fact of the Third Reich and the hegemony of Germany in Central Europe. Finally, Germany must accept the fact of the British Empire and recognize Britain's right to have a voice in the establishment of a European order which involves the vital interests of Britain. To restore the position of the western democracies, national unity is necessary because it was the failure of the democratic system to provide the necessary minimum of unity which led to the rise of dictatorships. National reorganization is also necessary—the necessity not only of military and economic reorganization for the purposes of national defense but the necessity for a political reorganization which will make it possible for democratic government to acquire the unity of control and rapidity of action which at present give the dictatorships so great an advantage in movements of emergency. Direct personal relations must be established with the rulers of other states. The whole weight of the nation must be behind its leaders who must be granted some permanency of office.

***Non-Catholic Religious Activities.***—Through their combined efforts, Wisconsin clergymen have virtually removed the evil of petty gambling, pin ball and slot machines, from the state of Wisconsin. More than a year ago, after a campaign of several months, the Milwaukee clergymen were able to pass a city ordinance outlawing gambling devices. At first, challenged by tavern keepers and distributors who prospered from the devices, the ordinance was subsequently upheld by local courts and finally by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Encouraged by this, churchmen introduced a similar bill into the State Legislature. Though backed enthusiastically by many Wisconsin organizations, the bill was killed. The clergymen, however, continued their campaign against petty gambling by securing cooperation of law-enforcement officials in many places. * * * Commendation of Secretary of State Hull's plea to twenty-nine nations of the world "for international cooperation to provide a haven of relief here and in other lands for all refugees from Austria," was expressed in a resolution adopted March 25 by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The resolution viewed with sorrow "the extension to Austria of the inhuman persecution which has already marked the conduct of the present German government toward the Jews of their own country," and expressed concern about "the new dangers which confront our Christian brethren in Austria, both Catholic and Protestant, whose religious liberty is destroyed with the loss of their political independence."

***Holding Companies.***—By a six to one decision in the Electric Bond and Share case, Justice Cardozo and Justice Reed not voting and Justice McReynolds dissenting, the Supreme Court held constitutional the sections of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 forcing utility holding corporations to register with the Securities and Exchange Commission or lose the privilege of the mails and other channels of interstate commerce. Four principal issues were treated. The court held that the Electric Bond and Share and six other great concerns have activities bringing them within the ambit of congressional authority, that the disputed sections could be separated from the rest of the holding company act, that such sections were constitutional, and that the full act, involving a number of hypothetical questions, did not have to be examined by the court before registration should be compulsory. As a result of the court's action, utility holding concerns with combined assets of about $15,000,000,000 are now compelled to furnish broad data on their financial structures, operations and business.

***Labor.***—The Supreme Court handed down a unanimous decision in the Griffin, Ga., circular case, forbidding any ordinances or laws requiring permits for the distribution of circulars and leaflets. The Civil Liberties Union

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and the C.I.O. immediately reacted to this decision in New Jersey where they announced their intention of taking up their fight with Mayor Hague of Jersey City by distributing leaflets. During the winter the local police had barred the distribution of their literature. * * * In Pennsylvania, the John L. Lewis-Senator Guffey political ticket, which is being run against the regular Democratic organization in the primaries, was completed by the addition of Mayor Wilson of Philadelphia, who will run for the senatorial nomination against Governor Earle. * * * The struggle within the National Maritime Union between various political and union factions resulted in the expulsion of Octave Loones, who produced a paper which charged officials of the union with being Communists and with using the union to foster the party. East Coast leader Curran of the union has published during the period of upset very strong statements against those who try to use the union for Communist purposes or as an organization which offers administrative jobs. * * * There was a mild resurgence of interest in federal labor laws. President Green of the A.F.L. let it be known his federation still wants a wages and hours law, and he said that the A.F.L. would probably accept an original minimum wage of $.30 an hour if there were provision for advancing that figure by steady degrees to $.40. The C.I.O. made vigorous protests before a Senate committee against the weak carrying out of the Wagner Act by private industry and by government.

***Church-State Relationship.***—In a recent broadcast Cardinal Gonçalves Cerejeira, Patriarch of Lisbon, Portugal, said, "The Church equally condemns clericalism and Caesarism, clericalism being the ecclesiastical government of temporal society and Caesarism the absolute government which subjects the things of God to the temporal. The Church has been the first to teach that it is not her business to govern temporal society; and a sacerdotal régime over temporal affairs is anti-Catholic. Churchmen may, in their civic capacity, take part in politics; but it should be on an equal footing with other citizens, without rights that belong only to their ecclesiastical character. The Church grows more and more insistent that priests leave all political activity to laymen, except the interests of God or of souls be at stake. . . . Political participation is invariably at the expense of their authority and prestige, and only diverts them from their spiritual mission of light and love. . . . Today clericalism is no longer the danger, since the Church herself repudiates theocratism. The real danger is . . . political Caesarism, which takes to itself the religious mission of abrogating the great Christian revolution of the separation of powers, [and] is incompatible with the Church. She would be prevaricating were she to abandon the spiritual sphere which Christ entrusted to her. It would be a betrayal of Christ. . . ."

***Outlook for Relief.*** — A comprehensive pamphlet, "Rural Youth on Relief," just published by the WPA, tells of the 2,000,000 needy young Americans assisted by the government in the past five years and calls attention to the neglected youth of our marginal farm families, for whom federal aid is essential. It recommends raising the school-leaving age to eighteen. Miss Josephine Roche, in announcing the convocation of a national health program conference, cited a subcommittee report on "the extensive and needless waste of life of mothers and babies, the far too prevalent illnesses of childhood and the wide unmet health needs of all the population." In the New York *Times* Aubrey Williams, WPA administrator, says that current relief problems caused by the nation's 12,000,000 unemployed must be met by an immediate program of social legislation—including a shorter work week—and industrial readjustment plus a long-range program which would include public works. The WPA has erected 11,000 useful public buildings and renovated 30,500 more in the past two years. Among the many other things completed were 43,500 miles of new streets and highways. Mr. Williams believes that "workers should be kept fit and ready to return to private industry," and that Americans are not "willing to degenerate into the acceptance of a standing army of paupers." He admits that his program involves huge additional federal outlays and seems to intimate that heavier taxation of the wealthy would be the most likely source for the added expenditures.

***Inexpensive Justice.***—During the last week of March, the Voluntary Defenders Committee, criminal branch of the Legal Aid Society, marked its twenty-first anniversary of rendering service to needy people charged with crime. Last year, the committee went to the assistance of 2,400 people, and the society as a whole gave advice and protection to more than 30,000 who could not afford to hire lawyers to advise or represent them. Just short of seventy years ago the poor man's only recourse in search of justice was the charitable-minded lawyer. At that time the country was undergoing rapid change. The city was coming into its own. In 1876, a group of public-spirited Germans founded the Deutscher Rechts-Schutz Verein to afford free legal advice to their countrymen. Soon, however, it lost its Germanic character and in 1896 became an institution giving service to all poor persons, irrespective of religion, national origin or race. As the Legal Aid Society it has served more than 1,250,000 poor of New York, and nearly 100 similar societies have been established in large cities throughout the country. But much remains to be done, according to Edward T. Tighe, director of the Volunteer Defenders Committee. "No single organization or reform can adequately do all the work of giving the poor man equal justice and protection," he says. "As the greatest enemy of the law is its own ramifications, so the greatest enemy of the poor man is his ignorance. The society seeks to see that justice is done. It does not compete with the bar. Most of its clients are people who cannot afford a lawyer, but when cases are brought in which involve money claims of more than $100 they are usually referred to regular law firms. Twenty-one lawyers are on its staff and there are numerous volunteers, both men and women, who do part-time work. More than 1,300 members of the New York legal firms are members of the society and they, with hundreds of laymen, contribute to its support.

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# The Play and Screen

## *All the Living*

A FEW years ago a producer who presented a play about lunatics in a lunatic asylum would probably have been judged a candidate for that asylum himself. But times have changed. Today so many lunatics have escaped going to the asylum that they have the world teetering above the abyss, and lunacy seems the order of the day. Unhappily the public lunatics possess far less sense of humor than those inhabiting the asylum envisaged by Hardie Albright for his play, "All the Living." A play about lunatics compounded entirely of gloom would be unbearable, but Mr. Albright's unfortunates have their humors, even their gaieties.

The play tells the story of a young doctor who discovers a treatment for dementia praecox and of his difficulties to get it adopted. In his struggles he loses his girl to another doctor, but gains his ambition otherwise. It is a rather thin story, and would not of itself have made one of the most interesting evenings of the dramatic year, but given as it is with incident, detail, local color, and characterization, and magnificently directed by Lee Strasberg, it is an evening not to be forgotten. "All the Living," like its predecessor which it so much resembles, "Men in White," is not perhaps in the truest sense a work of art, in that it is not a play composed of materials which have passed through the fire of the dramatist's imagination, and emerged transfused into a complete whole. It is rather a play made up of separate incidents projected photographically. It is, in short, not a work of creative power, or one which bears the impress of any poetic or even literary sense; but as photography it is excellent. I personally do not know if it gives a perfect picture of life in an asylum, but it certainly gives the impression that it does.

It is admirably acted by Leif Erickson and Sanford Meisner as the two young doctors, by Charles Dingle as the superintendent, by Elizabeth Young as the girl, and by Joaquin Souther as the older doctor. All the patients are excellent, but then, oddly enough, lunatics are always effective on the stage. I have never seen a poor one! The fact that with them the ordinary rules of conduct do not apply makes whatever they do seem veritable. And when a lunatic is both happy and funny, he is excruciatingly both, as John Alexander proves when he thinks he owns the world and even the fence about it. (At the Fulton Theatre.)

## *Whiteoaks*

THIS is a dramatization by Mazo de la Roche of her novel, "Whiteoaks of Jalna," and is not so much a play in the ordinary sense as an evening of character delineation. As such it is interesting and effective. Those who have read the Jalna novels know that they concern a matriarchy presided over by Gran Whiteoak, and including her three children and five grandchildren. The play has to do with the question of whom Gran is to leave her money to, and her choice of her piano-playing grandson, Finch. That Finch should get the money does not help the play, at least as Finch is conceived and played by Stephen Haggard. No wonder this Finch is disliked by his brothers, for the one thing he doesn't have is the thing his grandmother thinks he has—"guts." He is a very weak brother indeed. The real man of the lot is Renny, superbly played by Robert Shayne, and the fact that Gran didn't leave her money to him gives us the impression she was senile. However, there is nothing senile in Ethel Barrymore's impersonation of the part, for a very shrewd and dominant old woman indeed she makes her, and we resent the author's killing her at the second-act curtain. The last act is tame without her. As somehow piano-playing neurotics are out of date as heroes, we just can't believe that such a magnificant old war-horse as Gran Whiteoaks would have fallen for Finch's snivellings. Very eighteenth century she is, that is eighteenth century in the empire-making sense, and she would never have made the mistake of thinking that Finch had "guts." But perhaps the fault is partly in Mr. Haggard's playing, skilful as it is in its own neurotic way. (At the Hudson Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

## *The Call*

THE STORY of "The Call" had interesting possibilities, but they were stymied by the artificialities of technical treatment. Originally dialogued in French, the commercial distributors of the work in this country, for example, have deemed it advisable for greater audience consumption to inject painfully stilted English lines into the sound track, using a group of "actors" whose words are spoken with the heavy self-consciousness of amateurs.

As a young man, Charles de Foucauld's life was a selfish and rebellious existence. As an ambitious army officer, he defies social conventions and commandments. But, later, while stationed at an African post, he is influenced by the sobering spell of the Sahara, acquiring a feeling of the supernatural realities. On renouncing his worldly life, he embarks on a quest for spiritual salvation, first as a religious member of a Trappist community, then as a pilgrim to the Holy Land, and, finally as a priest, returning to Africa to labor as a missionary. With the advent of the World War and the colonial uprisings which followed, the cleric meets a martyr's death at the hands of mutinous natives.

The French producers traveled to the African desert to accentuate authenticity with original backgrounds, but both photographer and director evidently failed to achieve the full results intended for the expedition. Photographically the picture suffers from a general haphazardness. In direction, all sense of story continuity seems to have been sacrificed for a series of "travel" scenes. The musical background, however, is commendable. The scene of the death of the martyred Foucauld strangely overshadows all others in its religious impressiveness.

"The Call" was made possible through the subscription of 150,000 persons, presumably from France. In this country it is associated with the cause of the National Committee to Aid the Daughters of Mary, Health of the Sick.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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# Books

## Fighting Irish Sailor

*Gallant John Barry, The Story of a Naval Hero of Two Wars, by William Bell Clark. New York: The Macmillan Company.* $3.50.

THIS full-length biography of Captain John Barry (1745-1803) by Mr. William B. Clark, author of "Lambert Wickes, Sea-Raider and Diplomat" and "When the U-Boats Came to America," is the first definitive life of that splendid merchant captain and fighting Irish sailor in the American Revolution. There is much unpleasant truth in the author's prefatory remark: "John Barry has been the football of propagandists. Biased biographers, with a modicum of facts and abysmal ignorance of the history of his times, have distorted the entire life of the old Commodore. Seeking to create a great Roman Catholic naval hero, they have performed a disservice to their faith by over-emphasizing the religious aspect and actually under-emphasizing his splendid achievements." Unfortunately Catholic worthies have too frequently been treated as Catholics rather than as notables by zealous writers without formal training in history or a historical sense and with the rhetoric of exaggeration as a substitute for laborious research which no doubt they would control in their own professions of theology, law, medicine or journalism. Historical writing, and even teaching history, should be given professional status if history and biography are to be seriously considered by intelligent readers.

Properly informed concerning the Revolution and the post-war years, familiar with sailors and ships and skilled in the jargon of seafaring men, Mr. Clark has contrived to paint a picture of the true John Barry as a navigator and sea captain after an actual study of available source and secondary material some of which escaped "sectarian biographers" who repeated each other's facts, true and alleged, and allowed themselves to fall into a maelstrom of errors by confusing the Commodore by courtesy with some four other John Barrys who crossed his path in port, on seas, or in the West Indies, as well as with certain other members of the family as Patrick Barry who commanded a letter of marque for patriotism and profit and was lost at sea in 1778. The author is somewhat explainably annoyed by his predecessors, but after all the late M. I. J. Griffin's laborious efforts and commendable zeal in "discovering" Barry probably made possible this more authoritative contribution to early American maritime history—with Barry in the triangular trade, in the smuggling at St. Eustatia, on profitable letters marque, in fighting and convoying during the war, in the important but undramatic outfitting of ships, in the China trade and in command as top captain of a squadron in the quasi-war with the French Directory.

This is not a hard book to read, for it is stimulatingly written and follows certain methods of the new biography, such as making the hero speak for himself in a fashion irritating to a biographer of the old-life-and-times sort. It is verbose and too detailed, thus making the study unnecessarily lengthy. There is a general bibliography,

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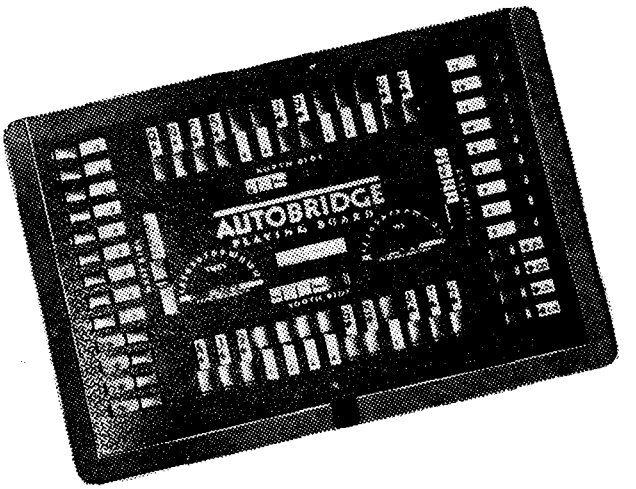


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although footnotes at the end of each chapter would be more serviceable as an indication of exactly how much has been based upon new material, how much more might have been found in foreign shipping news, and the extent of the actual dependence upon former chroniclers.

The author has included most of the old anecdotes, a little of the anti-English attitude, all the references to Barry's religious and racial services and strong suggestions of how reliable a young Irish Catholic immigrant had to be in order to rise to the quarter-deck of a merchant ship or to win a command in the revolutionary navy where patronage and nepotism had so much to do with appointments. There is a good deal of information concerning Barry's support of young Irish immigrants and his aid to suppliant relatives in Ireland, who probably lacked the sturdy stamina that made him a dominant figure along the quays and a man of a comfortable estate amassed with the aid of two successive wives, one Irish and the other of old Swedish-Pennsylvania stock who gave joy to his soul on her conversion to the Church. The author has appended a genealogy of the family, some of whose members have the tang of the sea, through Barry's nephew and protégé, Patrick Hayes, to the living descendants, including Barry Hayes Hepburn to whom the volume is dedicated.

RICHARD J. PURCELL.

## Country Business

*R.F.D., by Charles Allen Smart. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.* $2.50.

THE FIRST printing of "R.F.D.," which was a Book of the Month Club selection, brought forth 100,000 copies. The charm of it, attested or at least hinted at by such mathematics, appears to be the back-to-the-land theme. A city man returns to farming and notices the things about it that a city man naturally would. The honest author's ignorances corresponded closely to those of the urban buyer of the book, and so the story of his three years' introduction to agriculture satisfies many of his customers' curiosities. The author and his wife get acquainted with a kind of community, a business and a way of life which have a very sound romantic appeal to pale city-dwellers.

There is also a kind of fulness in the book. For urban pursuits, Mr. Smart substituted apparently more productive, pleasanter and richer activities. He records an immense number of healthy occupations to fill in a life. But after considering the overflowing and engrossing busy-ness of the new existence, all these things still seem to be a substitute, essentially desperate and threatened with boredom (just as passages in the book are boring). Under the overhearty insistence on a sort of Whitmanesque optimism, "R.F.D." projects a drab philosophy whose content is more deeply a denial. Liberalism has swung around from Manchester to a self-conscious and faddish acceptance of an amorphous Socialism, and from disinterested agnosticism to a more positive atheism. The failures of interest in "R.F.D.," the false ring of so much of its liveliness, its abortive social analysis and the unfinished character of what it pictures as the good life, argue powerfully against staking your life on the soil, any more than you should on city streets. The disarming qualities of the book do not seem disarming enough to keep one from genuine disturbance at its boisterously Philistine viewpoint, and at the viewpoint of the Book of the Month Club and the publishing trade which are promoting in this way the decline of the American town and country.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

## An Outline of Humor

*Humor and Humanity, by Stephen Leacock. New York: Henry Holt and Company.* $2.00.

THE IMMEDIATE result of reading an exhaustive analysis of humor is to make us doubt its existence. We are like the woman who stared at the hippopotamus and said, "I don't believe there is any such creature." Mr. Leacock has called his book "An Introduction to the Study of Humor"; but it is more like a death-warrant. An isolated joke is a good thing, unless it chances to be a bad thing; but an army of jokes, page after page of them, is as cheerless as an army of locusts. Yet this is an author who, when he chose, has made his readers laugh. He made us laugh during the World War which quickened all vital things; and he has kept us laughing ever since.

When Mr. Leacock stops relating funny stories and quoting funny verses, by which time we are steeped in gloom, when he writes critically of English and American humor with side snatches at French wit, he is altogether admirable. A critic without undue sentiment and without asperity, he has had a lifetime of pleasure out of books, and he has not been compelled to go far afield to look for them. He has had the good fortune to like what many of his fellow men have liked, and to feel no shadow of shame in acknowledging it. From that assumption of superiority which implies remoteness he is immaculately free. Therefore he speaks with authority when he condemns all lapses from taste, and all intrusions of humor into fields where it has no welcome.

The chapters on "The Humor of Situation" and "The Humor of Character" are the best in the book because they contain more of the author; and fewer quotations. A great many stories are told in them (Mr. Leacock remembers more stories than any other man in Christendom) and stories carry their chill. But some are good, and some are short, and all are easily forgotten.

AGNES REPPLIER.

## The Primacy of the Spiritual

*The Cross and the Crisis, by Fulton J. Sheen. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company.* $2.00.

ORIGINALLY presented as radio talks, this series of ten discussions, based largely upon the Christological interpretation of history as expounded by Watkin, Dawson, Berdyaev, Gurian and Hoffman, deals with the urgent problem of the salvation of western civilization. The world crisis, Monsignor Sheen properly insists, cannot be healed by political and economic panaceas, but only

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by forces not directly involved in the crisis itself—by a restoration of the primacy of the spiritual in human affairs.

By an analogical treatment of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, this brilliant apologist demonstrates how western civilization, in the disastrous sixteenth century, asked the Vicar of Christ for its share of the precious capital of wisdom and tradition garnered through all the preceding Christian centuries of trial, persecution, study and prayer. Century by century thereafter western civilization, free of the "thralldom" of Rome, wasted its spiritual capital. Today it is bankrupt, believing neither in the necessity of a religion nor in any obligation to a personal God.

Will western civilization return to the Father's House?

Such a return is possible, the author believes, only if four conditions are fulfilled. Western civilization must meditate upon this supremely important question: what does it profit a man if he fill the world with tractors and lose his immortal soul? It must recognize its own inadequacy, its own hunger and thirst for spiritual sustenance. It must acknowledge the authority of the Father's House so as to enjoy that real freedom which only comes with the acceptance of Truth. Finally, it must recapture the sense of sin and the need of forgiveness.

To the extent that we have compromised and betrayed Christianity, the guilt of the world's sin is on our hands and its responsibility on our souls. The salvation of western civilization depends, in the last analysis, not upon the intensity of our hatred for dictators or "economic royalists" but upon the strength of our personal determination to become Christlike.

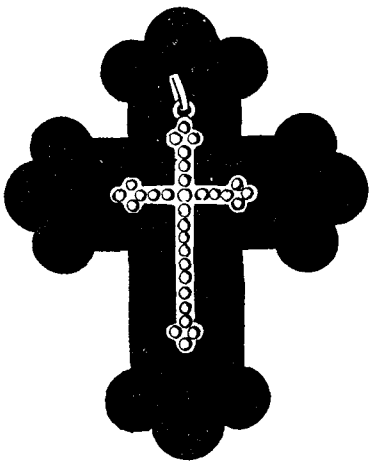
JOHN J. O'CONNOR.

## Contemporary England

*The Big Firm, by Amabel Williams-Ellis. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* $2.50.

THIS is an English novel; the tempo is slower, the characterization more detailed, the scenes more carefully built up and the effects perhaps more subtle than in its American counterpart. But it lacks pace in consequence and even halts upon occasion. One is halfway through its 400 pages before it really grips the attention; nevertheless, it does grow upon the reader and it finishes strongly.

The canvas is a long one, contemporary England, and the theme the new social consciousness that is disturbing all men's minds. Owen Wynne, a young scientist, goes to work for Consolidated Scientific Products—the Big Firm—because they can give him the apparatus and the funds the lack of which handicap his work at the university. He finds out later that the price he must pay is the prostitution of science to commercial exigencies, and he revolts. Meanwhile he has a love affair with Caro, the high-spirited, restless daughter of the firm's senior partner. Nicola, the junior partner's daughter, has married a prominent member of the Labor party and taken up Socialism. In the outcome Owen, who had at the start no social conscience, becomes a Socialist; Peter, Nicola's husband, temporizes and becomes conservative; and Nicola and Owen fall in love and, having run afoul



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# Next Week—

## THE NEW COMMONWEAL

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of the law because of labor agitation, leave England to make a new start together.

Mrs. Williams-Ellis is the sister of John Strachey the English Communist and there is a Leftward drift to her work. It is a true picture of English life—for the author knows intimately the habits of both worlds—but a discouraging one. Life has no real meaning for any of the protagonists and the highest motives evident are vague and humanitarian emotional reactions. Aimlessness and a complete lack of concrete moral standards, either in social or personal life, mark the entire work. Once you get used to the tempo, and within its limits of time, place and standards (or lack of them), it is a good novel by a clever and observant craftsman.

BRYAN M. O'REILLY.

## Joi de Vivre

*Play in Poetry, by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.* $1.50.

MR. UNTERMEYER'S place as a critic and savorer of contemporary poetry is secure and even though one may occasionally disagree with his appraisals, his appraisals are often illuminating and always well put. The present volume is a commentary on the blend of play and purpose in poetry with illustrative verses ranging from John Donne to Ogden Nash. By play Mr. Untermeyer does not mean *vers de société* or mere waggishness in rhyme but rather joy of spirit such as may spring from flirting with metaphors, as Shelley does in his "Skylark," or from thrilling with all things that live, as Wordsworth does in his "Intimations." Play so interpreted gives Mr. Untermeyer an open chance to quote some of the loveliest poems in the language and to voice critical *obiter dicta* which reveal his fine and catholic taste. At times he packs wisdom and insight into a sentence as when he says of Gerard Hopkins: "To him the world was not only colorful but prodigal, overflowing with divine largesse; nature was a beautiful turmoil and God was an eternal exuberance." And of Emily Dickinson: "Hers was a kind of super-observation, an observation in which whimsy continually alternated with intuition."

The final chapter, called "Poets to Come," is a timely discussion of the function of poetry in a changing world. It is a penetrating presentation to young poets of the double-horned dilemma which has faced two generations of poets who have also had to choose "between a too fluent prettiness and a forced ugliness; between an outworn idiom and a speciously 'up-to-date' vocabulary, between allusions which are so familiar that you cannot rouse to them and allusions so private or recondite that you cannot even recognize them." What lies behind this dilemma is admirably put and challenges the attention not merely of youthful poets but of all lovers of great poetry who believe with Milton that it is "simple, sensuous and passionate" and speaks with a universal voice. This brief concluding chapter is worth the price of the volume.

At least one reviewer remains unimpressed by the hitherto unpublished poem of Robert Frost.

JOSEPH J. REILLY.

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## Briefer Mention

*Ships in the Sky, by Gunnar Gunnarson. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.* $2.50. This autobiography of an Iceland childhood has a flavor all its own. Occupations and games are of the utmost simplicity with emphasis on the tasks of the soil, the seasons, unspoiled nature, family life. It is remarkable how much of the Christian tradition has persisted in this far corner of the secularized Europe of today. Even in translation the author's style is figurative and picturesque.

*Land of the Free, by Archibald MacLeish. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.* $3.00. Eighty-eight unusual photographs of places and people, most of which were taken for the Resettlement Administration, illustrated on the opposite page by a poem. Particularly stressed is the bewilderment of the agricultural population which sadly debates whether the American dream of liberty is finished.

*Tradition and Progress, by Ross Hoffman. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company.* $2.00. Twelve challenging historical essays which emphasize the necessity of applying the wisdom and experience embodied in Christian tradition to contemporary problems, together with a searching examination of modern attempts to contravene that tradition.

*Children of the Rising Sun, by Willard Price. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock.* $3.00. A sympathetic, comprehensive, first-hand account of Japan's people, way of life, resources, empire and ambitions, somewhat marred by the author's over-journalistic approach and limited cultural background.

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